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OCTOBER 1958

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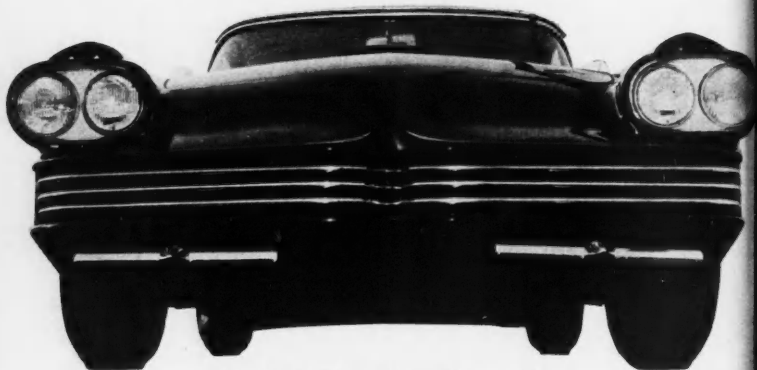
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## 1959

You'll find *IDEAS* Galore in the All-New . . .

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**"THE MONEY-SAVING WAY TO MAKE YOUR CAR  
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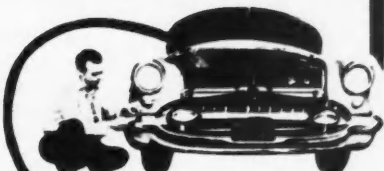
### ROD & CUSTOM Magazine, New Products Test, April, 1958:

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# CAR CRAFT

The "Show-How" Magazine

Vol. 6  
Published Monthly  
No. 6

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## cover

The striking red and white interior of Eddie Ducazu's roadster pickup is a colorful sample of what's in store in this month's issue. A special feature, starting on page 18, shows some of the latest and wildest coupe and roadster interiors seen to date.

—Anschochrome by Al Palocz

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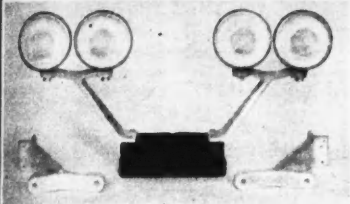
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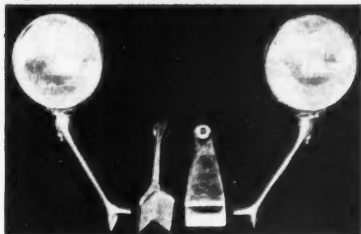


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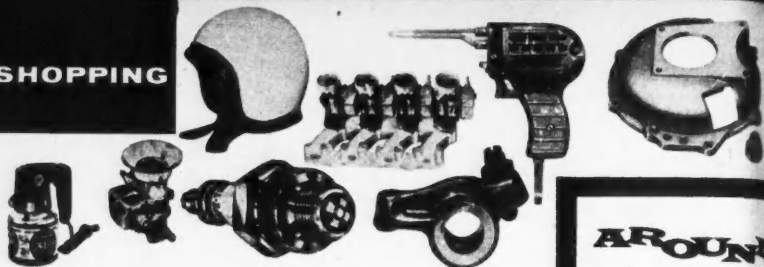
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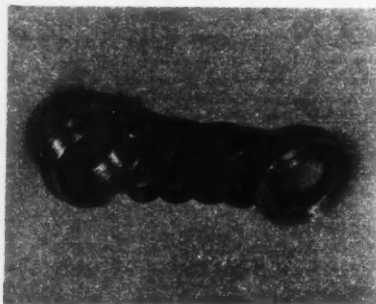
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## SHOPPING



AROUND

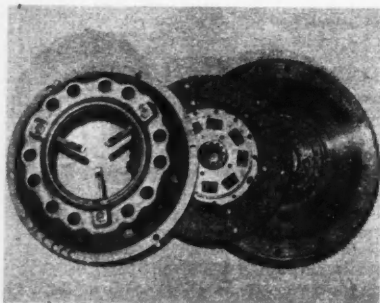


### SEAL-O-MATIC

A real boon to rodders is the Seal-O-Matic, designed to replace the factory unit at the end of the transmission output shaft. A superb seal, the new product has the added attraction of eliminating the driveline vibration so prevalent in late model cars, a feature which overshadows the basic sealing qualities. Available for most cars and trucks, just \$12.95. For further information write: Alex Cartright, c/o Traction Master Corp., 2917-cc W. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles 6, California.

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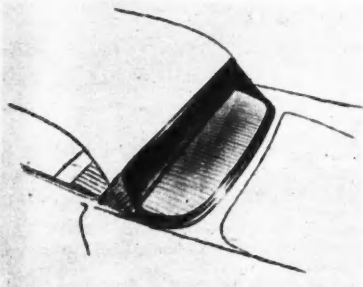
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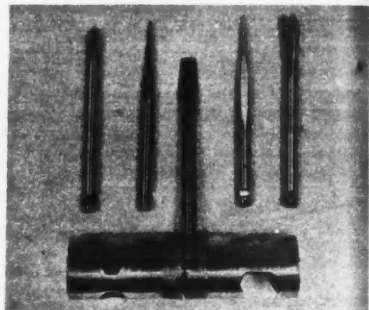
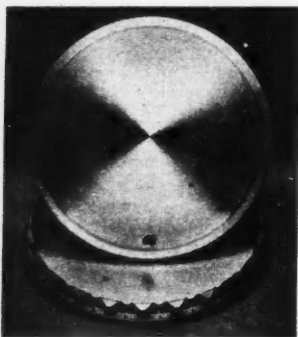
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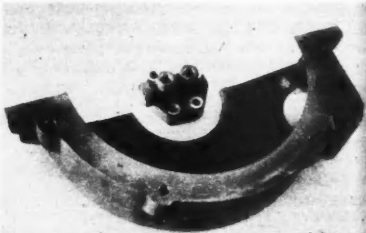


## NEW SNAP-ON "MOONS"

This new snap-on version of the Moon wheel disc is now offered for custom and street machines. Available in 14", 15" and 16" sizes, discs feature plain surface, with Sun-Ray finish. Fastens by cad-plated steel retaining ring which is part of disc. Made of lightweight aluminum, may be toned, louvered or polished. Set of 4, \$15.95. Price includes postage from: MOON EQUIPMENT CO., 10820-cc So. Norwalk Blvd., Santa Fe Springs, California.

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OCTOBER, 1958

# LETTERS

## MATTER OF MONEY

Dear Sir:

I am not in the habit of writing letters to car magazine editors but the discrepancies in your truck restyling article in the June issue force me to this end. Your excellent illustration by Mr. Collier and your parts and price list simply do not agree. In your cost tally you fail to show any charge for the following items shown: lowering, custom exhausts, shaved door-handles, moon hubcaps, and filling in the side body vents as in the illustration.

I feel that the \$1,000 limit is a very good thing, but I think that either Mr. Barris or Mr. Collier was stretching the price a little. The items I mentioned could easily run over one hundred dollars.

On the whole however, this was an excellent article that complimented an excellent magazine. Keep up the good work.

— John Barnes  
Culver City, California

You have us on the custom exhausts and Moon discs. As for lowering, nothing was mentioned about it. With the '55 Chev rear fenders and the canted front fenders plus the 5" section job the truck naturally looked lower. The body vents were disposed of during the sectioning as were the door handles. Of course we don't know how to open the doors if the windows were left rolled up. Anyway we're glad you're keeping an eye on us, John. — Ed.

## CUSTOM-HOT ROD SHOW

Dear Sir:

This is just a note to inform you and your readers of the forthcoming San Diego Annual Custom-Hot Rod car show. The dates for this year's show are October 15-19. It will be held in beautiful Balboa Park's Electric Building. Anyone wishing to enter or desiring further information write: Jim Hall, 3303 Claremont Drive, San Diego 17, California.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

— Jim Hall  
San Diego, Calif.

## GORILLA BROWN

Dear Sir:

It seems that Rich and Frank forgot to tell how they applied their "Gorilla Brown" exterior in your August issue. I suggest either beating in dried-up grape peelings with a 12¼ pound sledge-hammer, or by Scotch taping Authentic Gorilla hair to the complete body. But, unfortunately, Gorilla hair is rather hard for Von Ditch to pin stripe.

I also greatly enjoyed "Custom T-Bird Trickery." Keep up the good work and you'll always have me for a reader.

— Fred Hall  
Sunnyvale, Calif.

## FROM WAY OFF

Dear Sir:

I am a keen Hot-Rod enthusiast and follow your sport in the States as closely as possible. Hot-Rodding has recently become popular in

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CHOICE OF THOSE WHO KNOW & GO!

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- CRANKCASE BREATHERS
- ASCOT BLOCK-REAR TIRES
- OIL SUMPS (Large Capacity)
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this country, although we are limited in speed equipment.

I enclose a cutting from our daily "Press," the first news publicity of its kind that we have had here. It pictures a '34 Ford chopped to a roadster and sporting a '38 mill. The engine is completely chromed and also the back-plates for the brakes. It is painted jet black with white striping, white hood and black upholstery.

Because of import restrictions recently imposed in the country I cannot get "CAR CRAFT" at my local book stall any more, and I haven't any dollars for a subscription, so would like you to write back and tell us what you think about our up and coming sport.

I am 18, and own a '29 Model "A" Ford coupe which is beginning to look like a street-rod. I have rebuilt the original Model "A" engine and have dropped the car onto 16" wheels. I will try to send some photographs upon completion. Would also welcome some photos etc., of Model "A" hot rods from your side of the world. I thoroughly enjoyed reading your magazine it gives us some good ideas.

Hoping you will find this cutting good news to you.

— Malcolm Wilson

Christchurch, New Zealand

It certainly is good news, Malcolm. We always enjoy hearing of the hot rod sport spreading to another part of the world. — Ed.

### PICKUPS, PICKUPS, PICKUPS

Dear Sir:

Although I think your magazine is one of the best, I would like to point out and correct one small error detected in your June, 1958 issue.

In reference to the "Pickup Pictorial" featured in this particular issue on page 21, Nick Cozzitorto's '52, you displayed a picture showing a louvered hood with striping highlighting the neat treatment. I think if you investigate the hood shown a little closer you will find that it belongs to the neat little '50 pickup of Babe Rover. How 'bout it? Never the less, the magazine is great, so keep it coming.

— Roger Harris

Arlington, Virginia

You know we still haven't figured out where that picture came from. — Ed.

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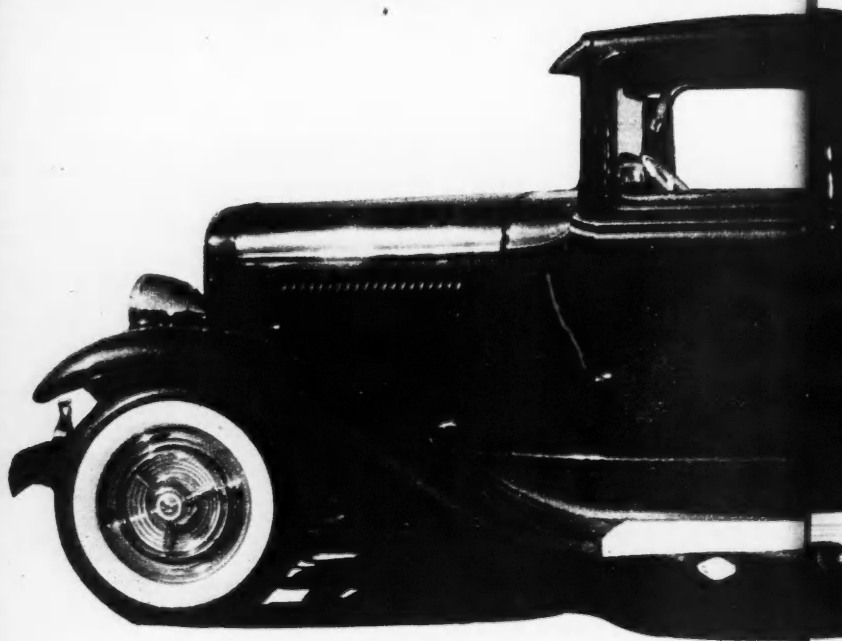
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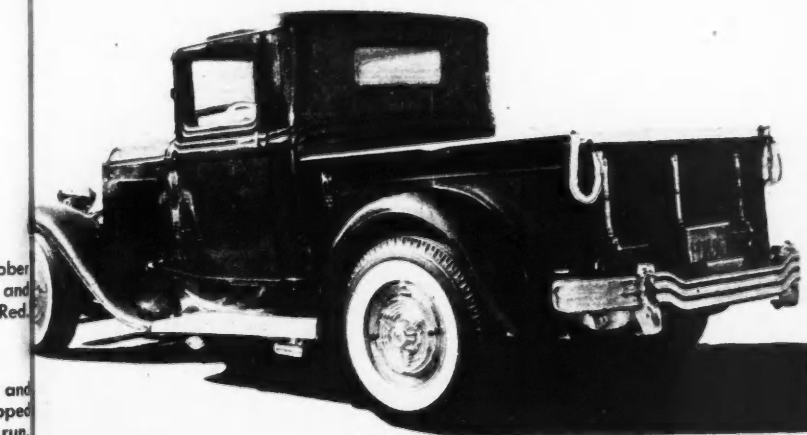
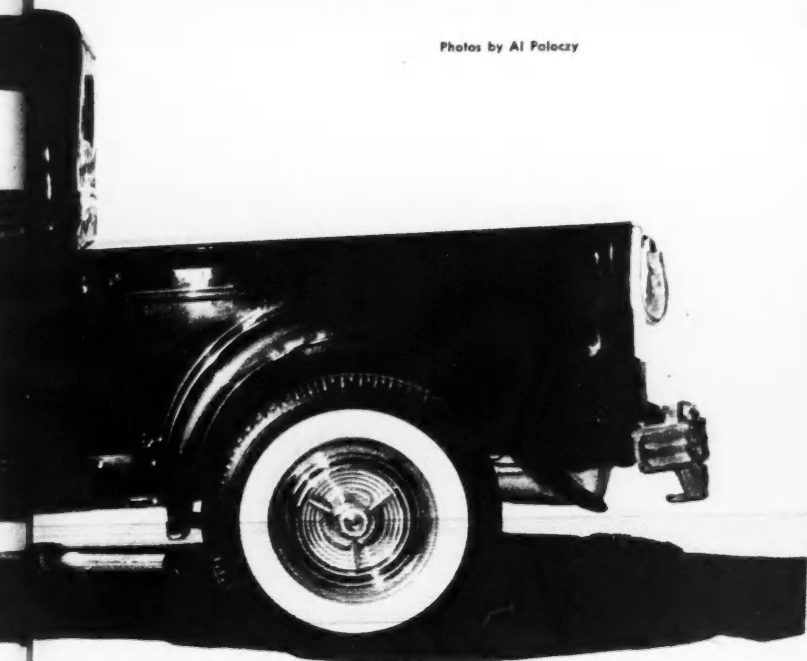
## PERSONABLE PICK-UP

Built for hauling...show trophies!

3-inch chopped top lowers height, bobbed bed shortens length on pick-up. White rubber is used to cover running boards; passenger car fenders replace originals. All body and paint work by Dick's Body Shop, Long Beach, Calif. '32 pick-up was lacquered Titian Red.

Cut-down '49 Plymouth wagon bumper protects 18" shortened bed, '48 Ford taillights and custom gravel pan which hides modified '48 Merc gas tank. Stock chassis with 3" dropped front axle is used. Monroe shocks, '41 Ford juice brakes, unequal-sized tires are run.

Photos by Al Polaczy



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OCTOBER, 1958

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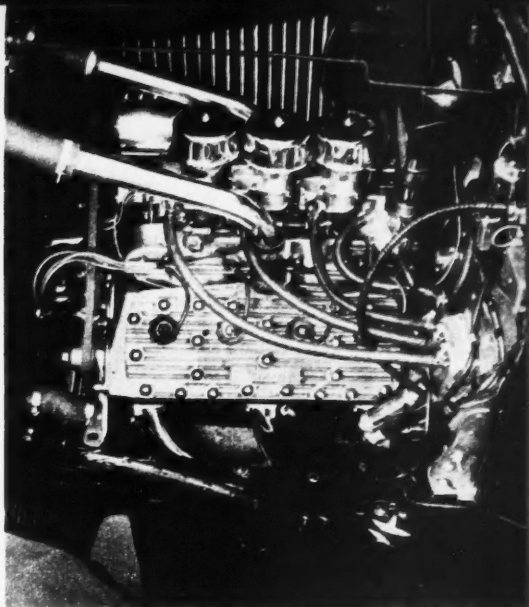


## PERSONABLE PICK-UP

Owner Ed Cousins and wife display one of many trophies won since finish of pick-up. Cousins is a member of the Renegades of Long Beach, a top club. Above, the filled '32 grille, re-built bar for sealed beam lights and cut '37 DeSoto bumper are seen. Entire front under carriage is chromed and painted.

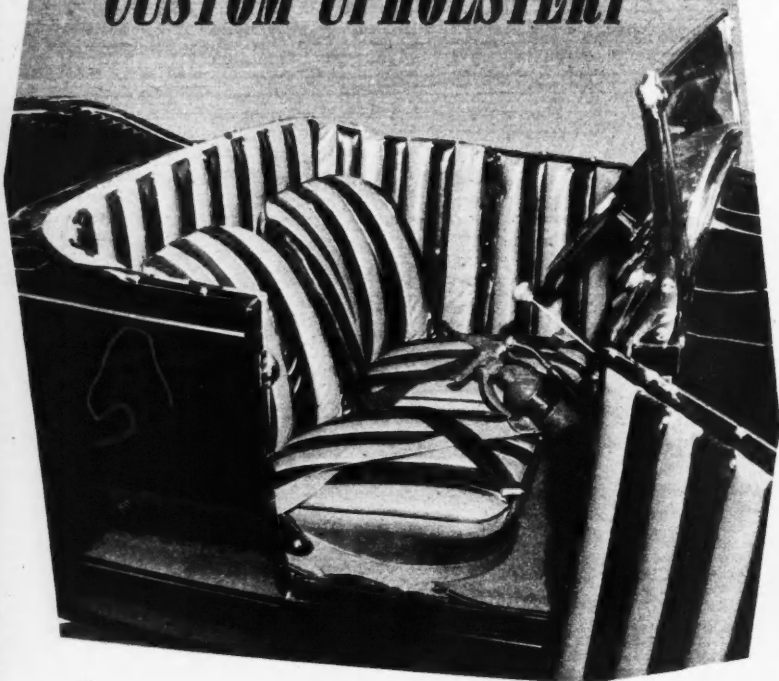


Displacing 289 cubic inches, '48 Merc runs Winfield cam, Johnson lifters, Jahns pistons, Evans 9-1 heads and 3-pot manifold with 97's. Stock valves, Zephyr springs, enlarged and polished ports are also in engine built entirely by owner. Power transmitted via light flywheel, Auburn clutch, '39 Ford box, Zephyr gears, and a stock rear-end.



Cousins re-built seats out of plywood, covered them in foam rubber and had wife stitch white with red trim leatherette pleat and roll seat covers. Nylon material is used to cover floors and to back-up seats. A '56 Ford steering wheel and the original dash with S-W gauges are used.

## ***CUSTOM UPHOLSTERY***



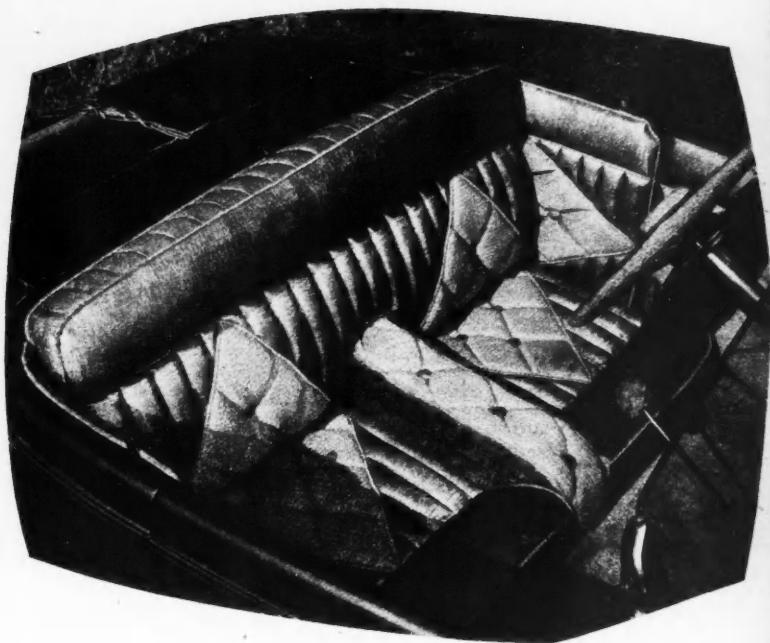
**W**HEN BUILDING UP a street-rod of early roadster or coupe vintage upholstery plays a major role with its over-all finished appearance. You might refer to it as the decorative frosting. Set in a surrounding of beautiful restore and special metal work, the interior of these models offers the builder yet another department to display originality of thought and design. What could serve as a better showcase for personal expression than the small bucket-like interior compartments found in these classic models? The basic contours of small squared-off door panels, uniform seats and flooring all lend themselves to unlimited designs using colorful combination of varied fabrics. Here then is a salon of the latest interior stylings of today's street-rod.



# for your street rod

## roadsters

Typical of the radical plush-bucket styling in today's roadster models can be seen in these two lead photographs. At left we have a very elaborate treatment of gold plastic and a fabric combination button tufted in a diamond motif displaying specially constructed center arm rest. Contrast to this is the uniform candy striped pattern found below done in vertical pleats of rich red and white Naugahyde. Seat belts also follow color scheme.





## ***CUSTOM UPHOLSTERY*** **roadsters**

### **ABOVE •**

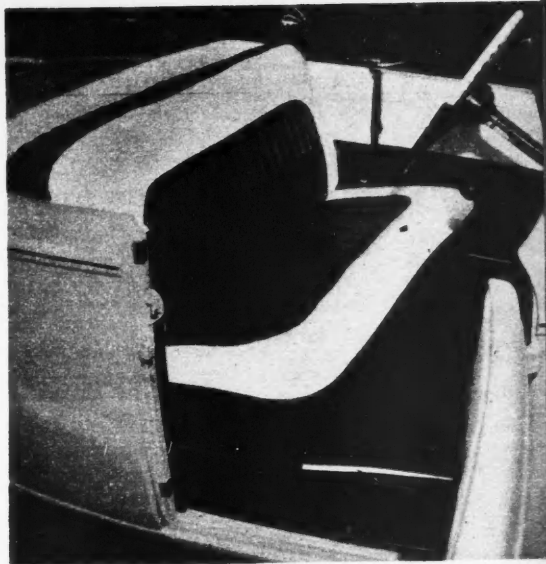
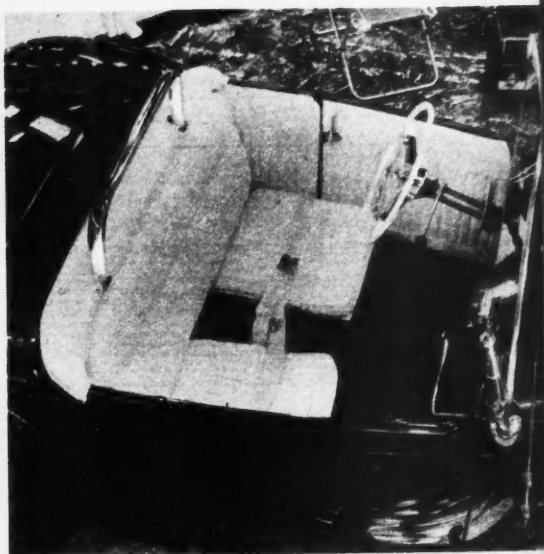
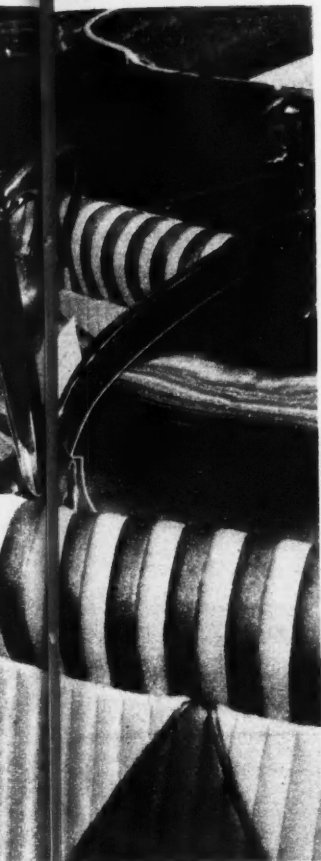
Heavy striped roll contouring perimeter of cockpit presents striking contrast to simple diamond pattern of seats in roadster above. Notice that door panels carry same theme.

### **ABOVE RIGHT •**

Roadster at top right features unusual seating arrangement in that seat bottoms are divided by driveshaft tunnel, yet back rest remains one-piece. Chrome roll bar blends beautifully with all-white interior. Note small "boot" filling space behind seat.

### **LOWER RIGHT •**

Plays of dark and light upholstery highlight cockpit of roadster seen at lower right. Large horseshoe pattern worked into design of seat is real switch from treatment of similar type.



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OCTOBER, 1958

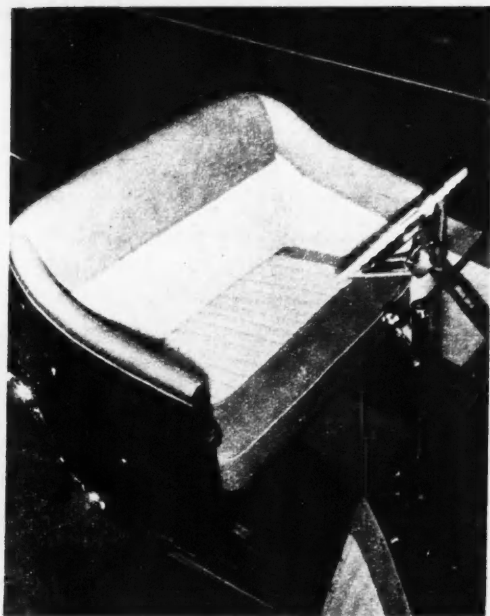
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## ***CUSTOM UPHOLSTERY***

**coupes**

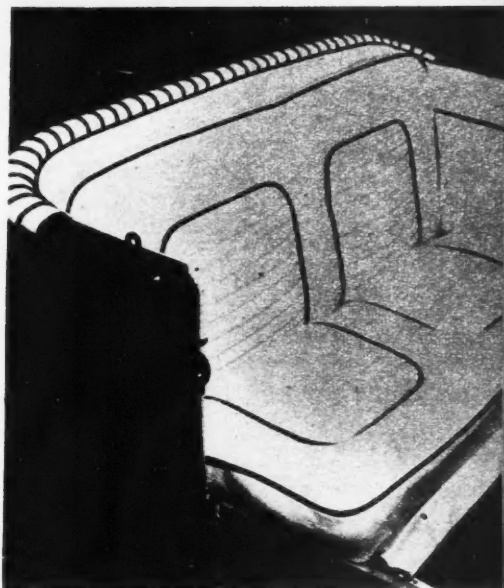
Individual seating arrangement as seen below is rapidly becoming standard practice with roadster enthusiasts, especially so with deeply channeled bodies. Area between seats is many times turned into functional use as an arm rest, instrument panel, or for radio.





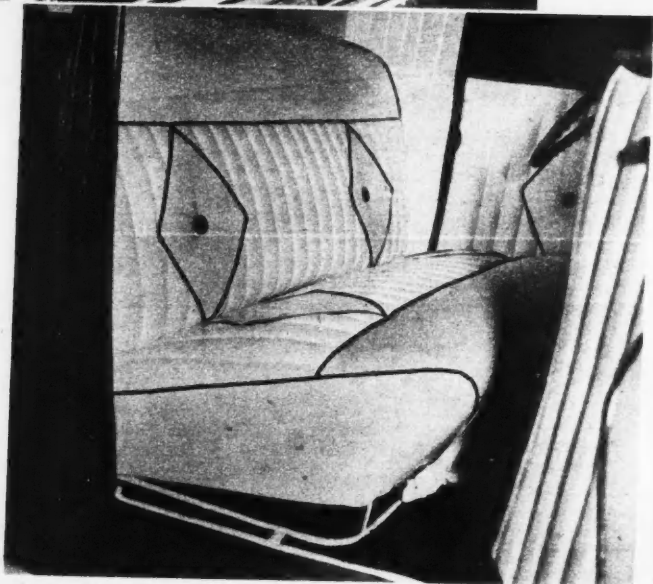
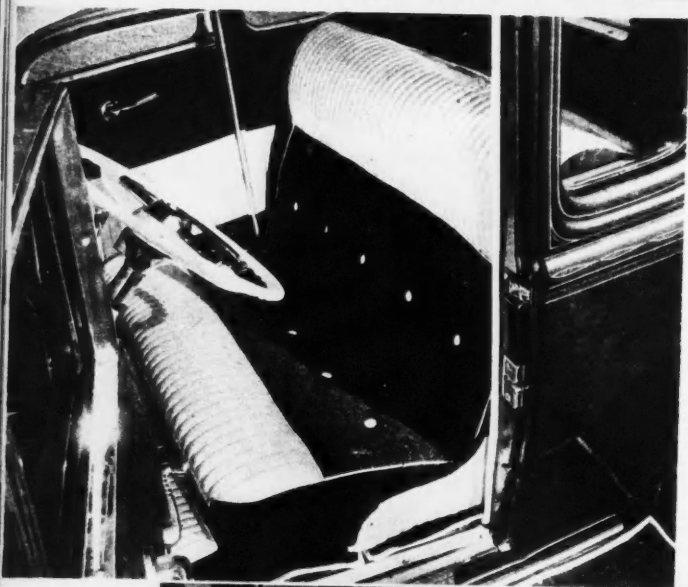
The traditional large roll and pleat designs still retain their popularity with small bucket cockpits found in early "T" Fords. Upholstery styling of this type seems to harmonize with simple lines of body playing down gaiety found in show cars.

Striking contrast is lent this all-white interior of rolls and pleats by bordering seat edges and contours with dark piping. Interesting roll at rear is combo of piping and Naugahyde in seats.



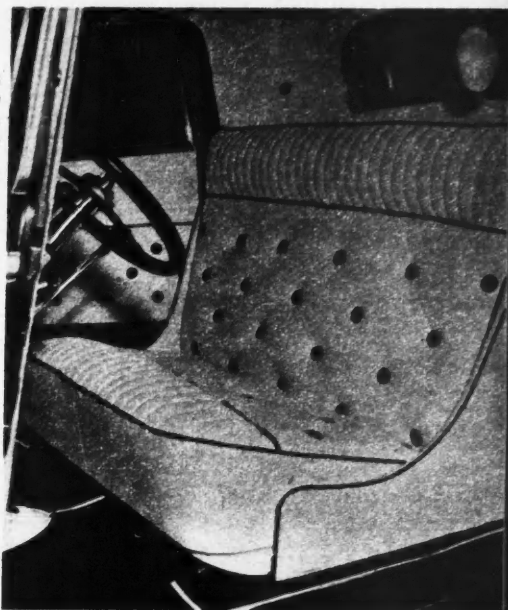
## ***CUSTOM UPHOLSTERY***

**coupes**



LEFT •

Coupe interiors in many cases will follow similar upholstery trends found in late model custom cars. The one at our left incorporates a large head roll, is button-tufted, makes use of both fabric and Naugahyde for covering. Design is not too far removed from late model cars, but for a '32 Ford—the wildest!

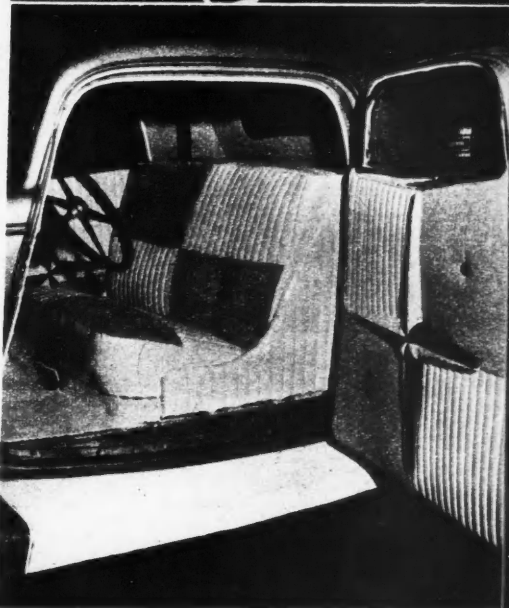


RIGHT •

Buttons, pleats and contrasting piping all create special effects for this beautiful coupe's interior. Color scheme is red/white.

LEFT •

Similar to the roadster pictured on previous page, dark piping is again employed to accentuate and decorate all-white theme.

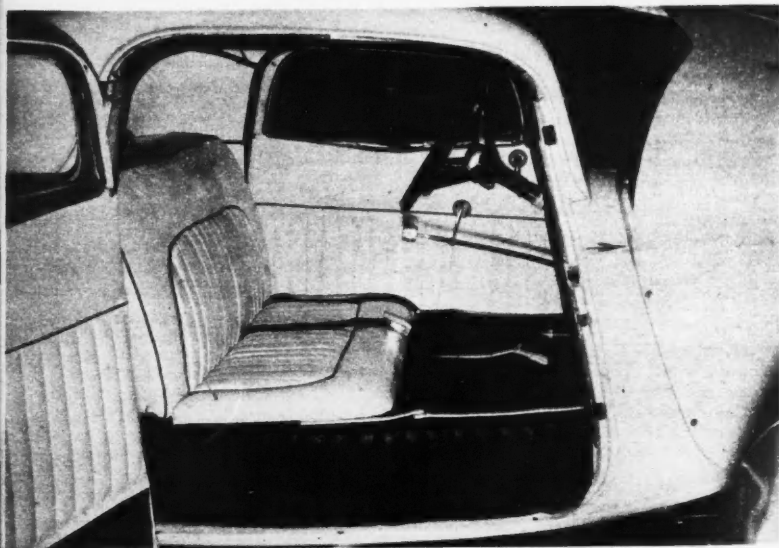


RIGHT •

An interior possessing unusual originality is this '34 coupe's styling whereby cloth fabrics were combined with Naugahyde in a checkered/pleated pattern. Even seat's side frame received full compliments of pleats. Note unusual star design built into door panels. One button tufting creates attractiveness in fabric portions of seats.

# ***CUSTOM UPHOLSTERY***

**coupes**

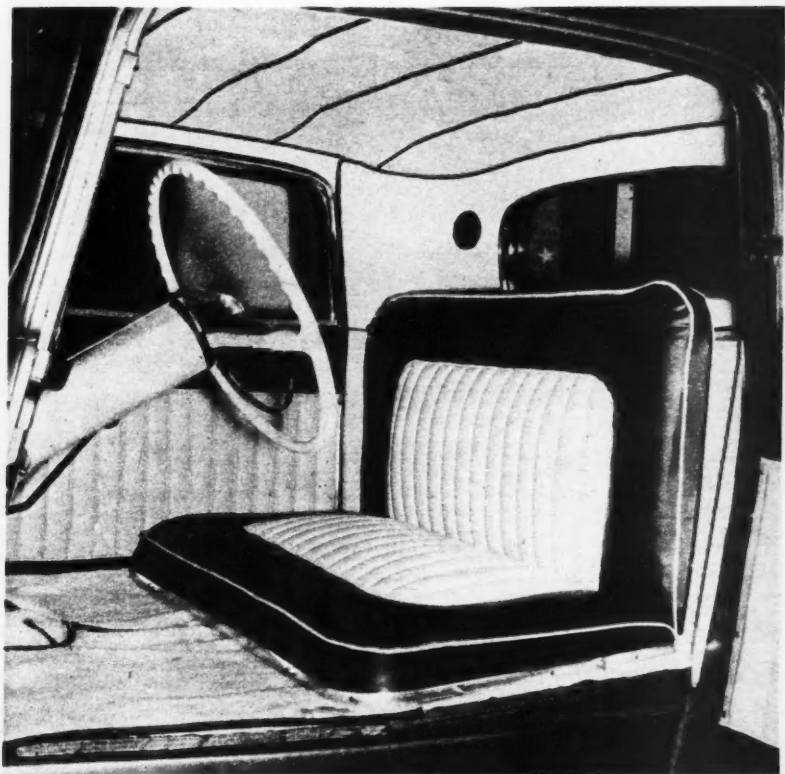


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"The farther down you go—the less height!" seems to be theme of the channeled coupes. Interiors take on complete re-construction and emerge in all sizes, shapes and angles. No doubt something is left to be desired for comfort, but with so many new cushion-filling materials on the market such as rubberized horse hair, resilient styro-foam, etc., much comfort can be retained. Upholstery themes vary from rolls and pleats of vertical design to that of horizontal patterns. Unique upholstery treatment when channeling is to neatly apply row of pleats along exposed edge of frame rail as can be seen with '34 Ford at the top of the opposite page. Another though is to carry carpeting material from interior flooring down over the face of the frame for neat appearance.





## simplified CHEV SWITCH

by Bob Pendergast

**W**AY BACK IN THE April '56 edition of *CAR CRAFT* we described a pioneer installation of one of the then-new Chevrolet V8 engines into a '49-'52 Chevrolet. Long-time readers of this magazine will remember that out of the five pages devoted to the how-to-do-it photo sequence, three were required to reveal the complicated procedure needed to join the V8 bell housing to the "6" transmission.

Now, two and a half years later, the logical way to do the job, impractical to use before because of higher costs, can be revealed. Rather than go to the trouble of mating mis-matched components, why not use V8 parts all the way? In '56, a junk yard possessing a '55 or '56 Chev was a rare thing, and the only source of Chev V8 transmissions, drive-shafts and rear-ends was the Chevrolet dealers' new-parts bin. The cost of substituting these late-model pieces was prohibitive.

But all this was changed—the '59 models are already being seen around town in many areas, and a '55 is considered "an older car." Any '49-'52 Chev owner who thinks enough of the "Ol' Gal" to liven 'er up with a '55-'57 engine shouldn't hesitate to really go the route

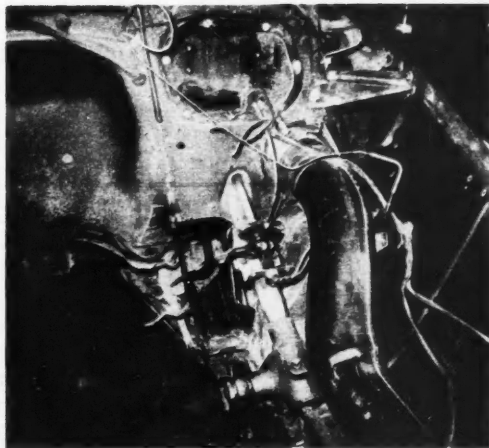


and put in a complete drive-line to match — particularly when the parts required may now be obtained from the neighborhood "junky" for a fraction of their original cost. Life expectancy of '49-'52 drive-line components hooked to a high-stepping V8 isn't too great anyhow — so if you didn't replace them now, you would probably need them later anyway.

So this is how it's done — the "6" engine, trans, and torque-tube drive rear-end are removed, followed by the installation of the '55-'57 rear-end, Hotchkiss drive-line, and

trans. The swap described here used a Powerglide, but is only slightly more complicated when using the stick-shift box. New center-bolt holes must be drilled for the rear spring mounts to accommodate the later rear end, but the correct location is only  $1\frac{3}{4}$ " forward of the original. Two '55 drive-shafts are then split, and re-spliced together to form a new shaft of the correct length — better measure this one yourself as factory tolerances sometimes vary. Then you're ready to take up where our accompanying sequence begins.

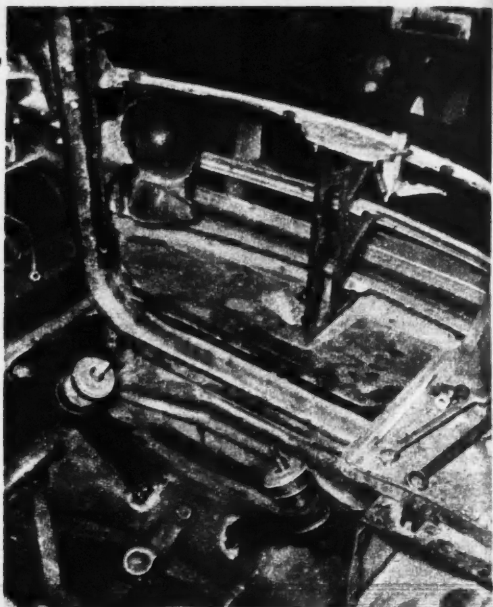
ABOVE, LEFT • Ken Scott, right, Alabama engine swapper, and his dad get '55 Chev V8 with Powerglide ready for installation in Dad's '51. Swap was simplified through use of '55 Chev transmission and rear-end, plus longer-than-stock driveshaft that was made out of two used ones.



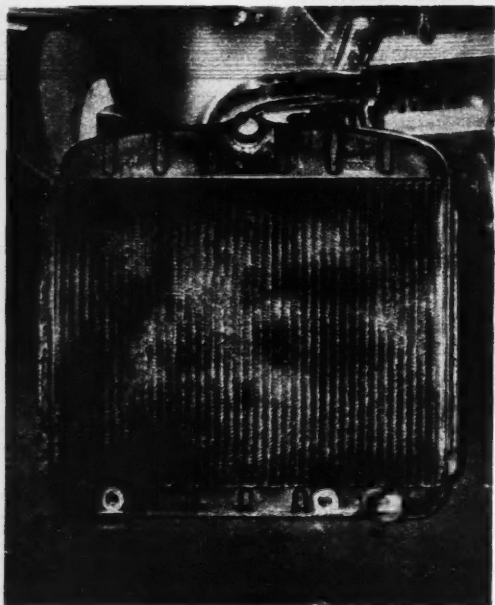
RIGHT • Longer driveshaft allows engine to be mounted farther forward than if original was used. This eliminates chopping out of heater duct as was formerly required, but firewall braces must still be "put to the torch" as shown in accompanying photo.

## ENGINE SWAP

New front engine mounts were fabricated from  $\frac{5}{16}$ " steel stock. The lower ends rest on cross-member while upper ends are secured to top of frame rail. Angle of the mounts matches inclination of pad on engine block, providing more resistance to twist than there was before.

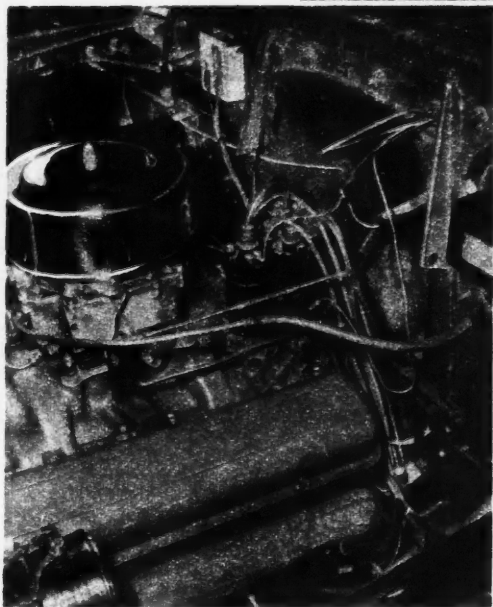


Photos by Ken Scott



Cooling system conversion was accomplished by modifying the existing rad. Lower tank was removed and replaced with '55 component to provide two outlets. Stock upper tank was retained but inlet size had to be changed to conform to V8 hose.

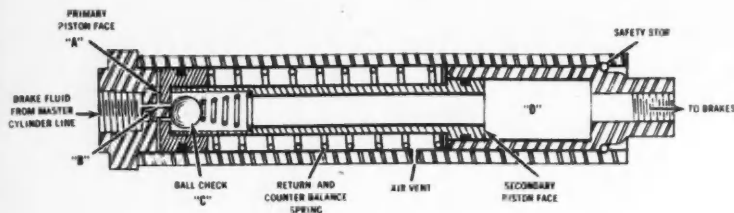
Two pieces of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " steel plate were cut to shape and welded together to form rear transmission mount. Adapting late Powerglide to early chassis required no additional changes other than using same linkage as car for correct quadrant reading.



Throttle linkage was adapted from '55 Ford "6". Electrical system conversion included changing to 12V bulbs throughout, installing resistor between battery and radio and heater. Speedometer cable hooked up to the late PG without changes. Conversion is now in daily use.

# EASY POWER BRAKE INSTALLATION

**new self-contained unit makes  
child's-play of a man-sized job**



BY BOB PENDERGAST

Photos by Colin Creitz

THE HISTORY OF THE automobile is replete with that most difficult and complicated of engineering tasks—*making things simpler*. Early cars had mechanical brakes that were simple in principle, but complex in operation due to their 'constant need for adjustment. Talk to any old-time rodder who ever drove an early mechanical-brake equipped Ford roadster, and he'll tell you that the one tool he wouldn't leave at home was the wrench used for adjusting the brakes.

Hydraulic brakes, much more complicated in principle, replaced the mechanical models because they were *simpler* in operation—adjustment was seldom required between lining replacements. Now power brakes have come into vogue—but unfortunately seem in many cases to have reversed the trend. Although simple in principle, many power brake units are complex in operation, requiring a complicated procedure to install on cars not having them as original equipment.

To get the power boost without the complications, it takes a simple gadget to do the job—at least one that's simple in operation. We discovered one recently that's so simple

in operation and installation that we knew that it must be complicated in principle, and sure enough, it was. The long and short of it is this: complicated principle, simple operation and installation. It's called the "NO-VAC" brake control.

Consisting of a firecracker-sized cylinder with a threaded opening in each end, the "NO-VAC" is installed in your hydraulic brake system between the master cylinder and the lines running out to your car's wheel cylinders. That's all there is to it—simple, huh? You put in this little gadget, and for any given amount of line pressure you need, the pedal pressure is half what it would be with the stock system.

But simple as the installation shown in the accompanying how-to-do-it photos actually is, the principle that makes this simplification possible is devilishly complicated. Look at the cut-away drawing of the "NO-VAC" and you'll see a cylinder with two pistons; one within the other, controlled by two coil springs. In the midst of it all you'll notice a ball-check valve, and probably wonder what it contributes. In fact, you'll probably fail to

understand how anything so simple can do so much—we did!

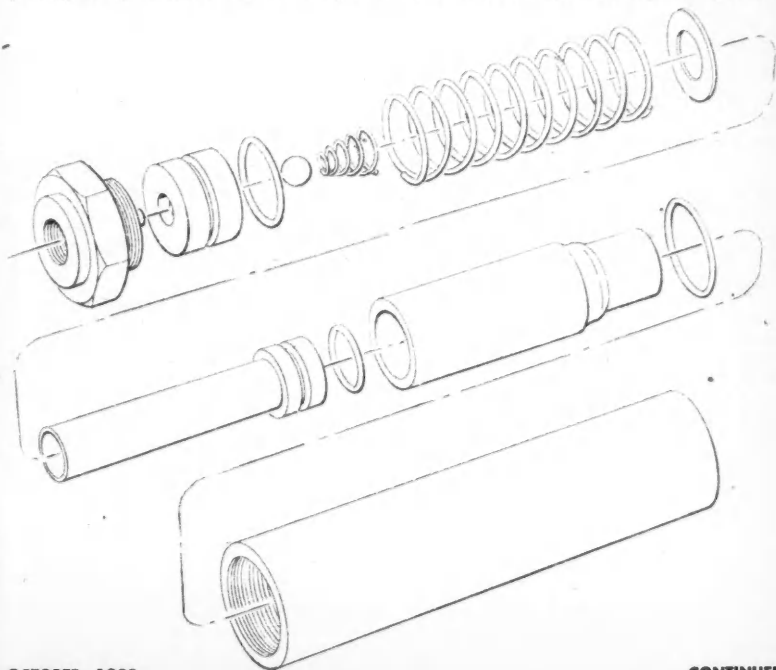
But an explanation was forthcoming from one of the design engineers at Superweld Corporation, the North Hollywood, California firm that manufactures "NO-VAC". Then the light went on—the little piston (see drawing) within the bigger one is what gets the job done. To fully understand, let's look at how your stock system works: When you depress your brake pedal, the plunger in the master cylinder forces hydraulic fluid out of the cylinder into your network of lines leading out to the wheel cylinders. There, this moving fluid is put to work forcing the brake shoes outwards into contact with the revolving drums. Additional pressure, as required, is supplied by your foot, via this system, to increase the pressure between shoes and drums until the friction applied is sufficient to slow the car the desired amount.

When "NO-VAC" is installed between the master cylinder and the lines, something different takes place. When the pedal is depressed, etc., and the fluid flows out of the master cylinder, it now goes into "NO-VAC" before entering the lines. Fluid flows through "NO-VAC" until enough has passed to move the shoes out against the drums. Up to this point, pedal pressure with or without power

brakes is about the same in any system, because there's little resistance to the outward movement of the shoes. But—when the shoes come into contact with the drum and the heat is on, literally, that's when the system without power assist requires you to grunt a little to get the car stopped.

Not so with "NO-VAC"—because this is when the little plunger inside the big one springs into action just like a comic book super-being. The primary (bigger) piston face moves away from the fluid entrance allowing that heretofore mysterious ball-check valve to close. Pressure now builds up behind the smaller, secondary piston at a rate greater than on the primary piston face. This increases the pressure in the lines, boosting brake shoe pressure—and at no cost to the sole of your shoe because of the *extra leverage* gained by using the *small* plunger to do the *big* part of the brake application job.

This is because a small plunger working against a bigger one through hydraulic fluid gains leverage in the same way a long bar is better than a short one when you're trying to pry-off a corroded cylinder head. So you see that the *simplification* offered you in installing power brakes on your car has only come about through a *complication* in the principles involved—anyone for engineering school?



## EASY POWER BRAKE INSTALLATION



First step in "No-Vac" installation is disconnecting main line from master cylinder. Units are available through parts suppliers.



Fitting furnished in "No-Vac" installation kit replaces line just removed. Unit mounts directly on cylinder in many late cars.



"No-Vac" unit is attached to cylinder; new outlet fitting to main line fastened. Sellers of the new unit will be equipped to install.



With all fittings tight but one, system is bled and additional fluid added as needed. "No-Vac" price is under \$35 in most areas.

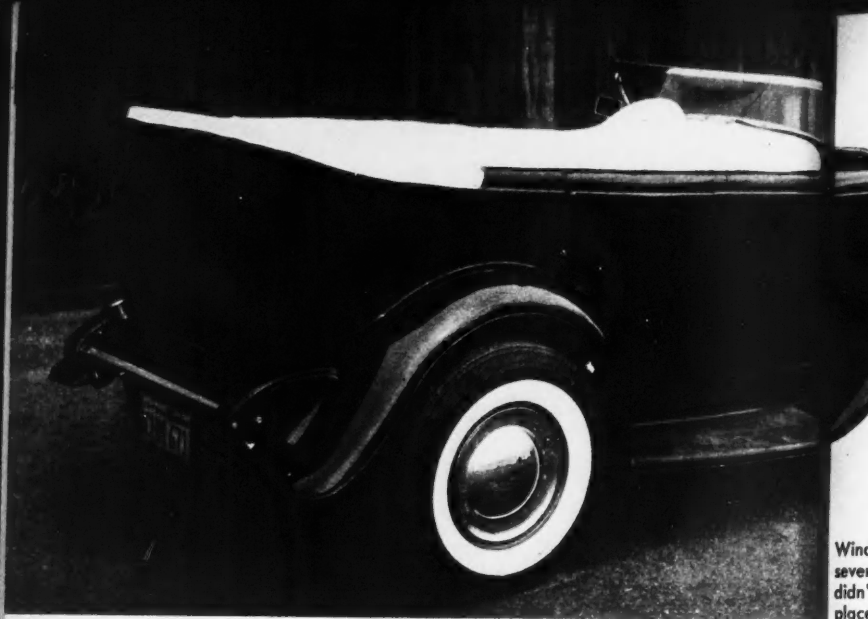


*Dodge-driven '32 Ford Phaeton makes a fine*

## **FRESH-AIR FORDOR**



**Jet-Black Deuce** is rare four-door Phaeton model, lowered up front via dropped axle, otherwise retaining standard suspension. Mercury hydraulic brakes halt rotation of composite wheels, made-up from Merc centers mounting Chrysler wide-base safety rims.



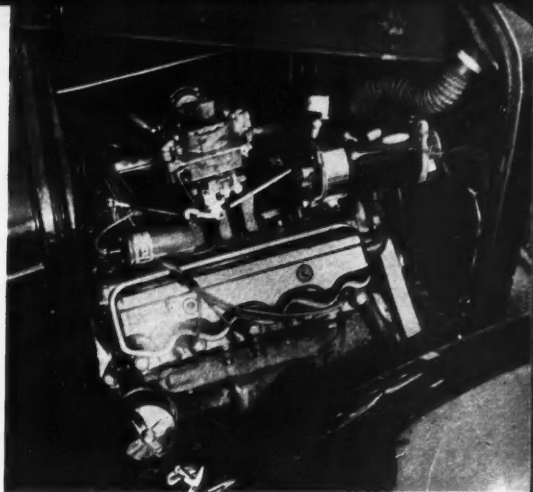
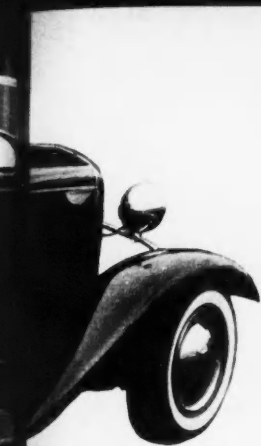
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# Fresh-Air Fordor



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Windshield frame has been chopped some seven inches since the builder decided he didn't want to run a top. Tinted glass replaces original. Rear-end is 3.78 '48 Merc.

Single-rocker-shaft '55 Dodge mill is model with "Polyspherical" heads, runs Spalding cam, solid lifters, Dodge "D-500" ignition. Lincoln gears boost low and second "wind".

Builder Ron Durr hails from Menlo Park, Calif., says Dick & Dale's Upholstery of Redwood City get credit for fine tarp; Parodis of same city did lacquer.

Universal replacement seal beams were chromed for added appeal, as was mounting bar. Filled-in shell and louvered hood make hot rod status "official".





*Neat for the street,  
Ed Thompson's road-rod  
proves there's*

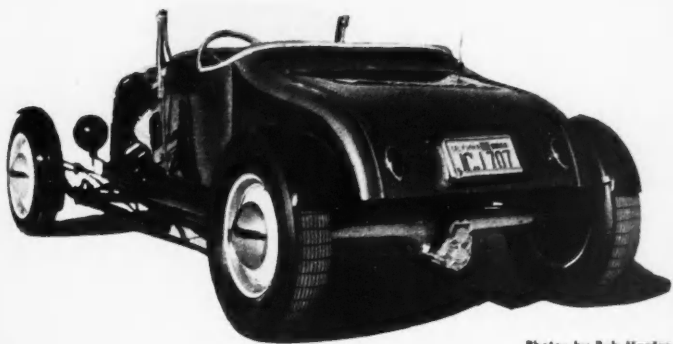
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Photos by Bob Hardee



Believing that roadsters in general and "T's" in particular are the only true hot rods, Ed Thompson of San Diego, Calif., expresses this opinion with his purple-lacquered '27-T. Filled-in '32 shell is one of its classic features. Ed expressed his tastes in an immaculate way.

Upper corner photo reveals feature of Thompson's car conforming to California roadster tradition: '39 Ford taillights. In the "old" days, only "squares" ran anything else! Individuality spices tradition throughout the car. Fenders were built to conform with law.



ABOVE • Exotic-looking tires are Wards racing ribs, front, and cross-grooved Good-years. Dropped axle and reversed spring eyes have tie-rod pass above radius rods.

RIGHT • While '48 Ford hydraulics do the binding chores in the rear, special Kinmont disc brakes snub-down the front. LEFT • Halibrand quick-change rear end center section permits 3.27 ring and pinion ratio to be reduced to 4.05 for slower city driving.

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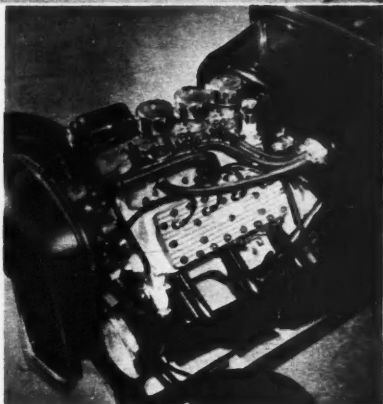
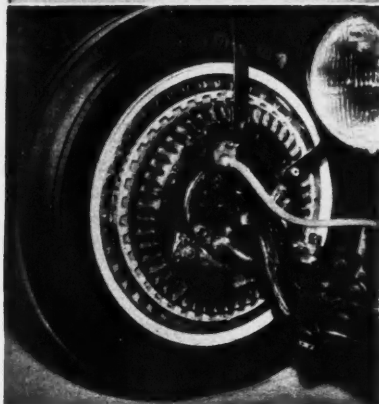
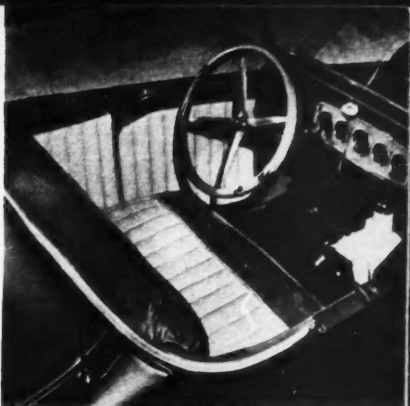
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**RIGHT** • Authentic "T" wheel and windshield brackets furnish contrast to modern tan and white upholstery, S-W instrument cluster.

**BELOW** • '32 frame, front and rear-ends, trans, make-up running gear. Fabulous finish, all bodywork done by Art Johnson.

**CORNER** • Flathead Merc boasts 292" from .030" over 3  $\frac{3}{8}$ " bore, 4" stroke. Edelbrock heads and manifold, Harman-Collins cam and mag boost power through Albros clutch-flywheel combination. Honest horses: 230!



*In Vancouver, B.C., hopped-up  
and customized Chevs are a popular*

## COLUMBIAN COMBINATION



Owner Milt Goodman and friend Jack Williams, both of Vancouver, B.C., Canada, collaborated on the designing and metal-work on Milt's '55 Chevrolet two-door. Stock grille cavity is filled out with cut-down '58 Chevy grille. A simple grille swap for the '55 Chevys.

**RIGHT** • Side appearance is cleaned up by shaving of door handles and removal of vertical trim strips. Re-worked spindles dropped front end 4" while blocks are used for 6" drop at rear. Short larks pipes protrude just behind front wheels. Hubcaps are Chrysler Imperial.

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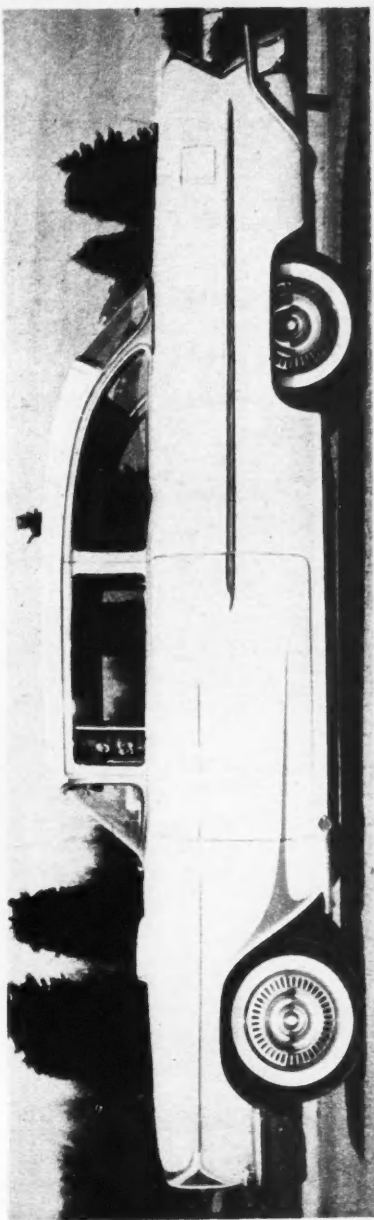


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Photos by Bud Lang

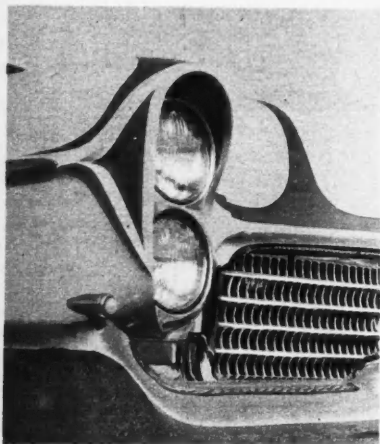


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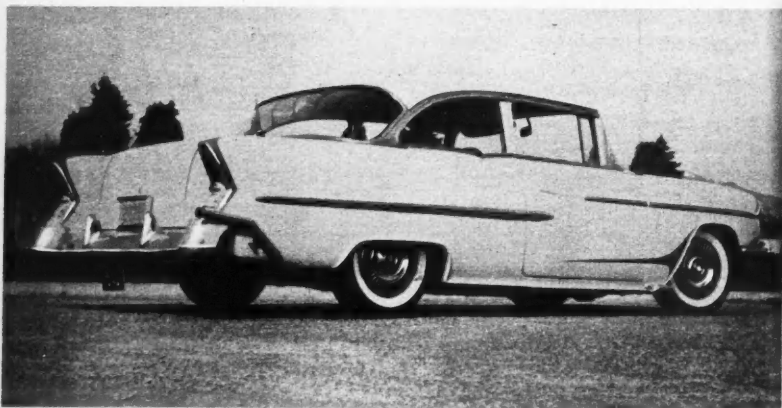
OCTOBER, 1958

# COLUMBIAN COMBINATION

Novel headlight treatment features '58 Chevrolet quad-light units mounted vertically. "Flares" are molded to the fenders.



BELOW • Car is painted Iris white and has tasteful, moderate paint scalloping in contrasting color. Rear bumper is '56 Chevy.



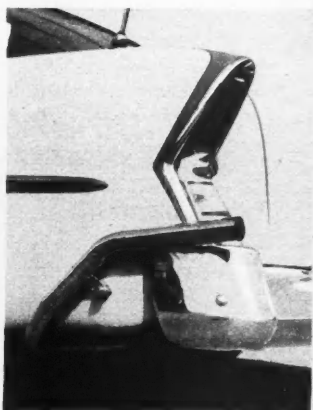
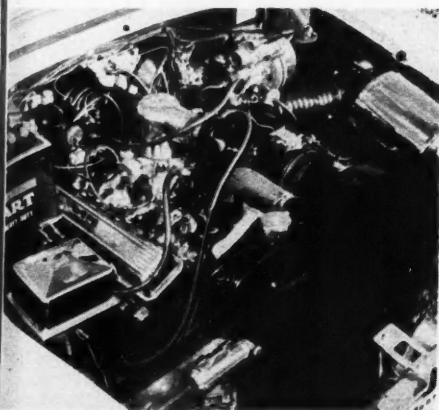
ABOVE • Special-built airscoop, with chrome trim in opening, is mounted on shaved hood. '58 Chev front bumper is sectioned 6 1/2".





chrome hood. 5 1/2". Sparkling, hopped-up '56 Chevrolet mill has competition cam, Mallory ignition and a McCulloch supercharger. Car runs at drags.

Rear fenders are extended 4 1/2" and formed to house complete '56 Buick taillight units. Note the unusual treatment of exhaust pipe.





## MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

*Bill Shank's Chev was modified with this magazine in mind*

Chrysler grille of '56 vintage graces front end of '56 Chevy. Headlights, parking lights, and bumpers are stock. Olds discs and header plugs add to custom appearance. Pleated and rolled interior with maroon and white color scheme vie for viewer's attention. All exterior chrome trim except side pieces were removed lending "clean" look to Chev coupe.



Photos by Dick Day

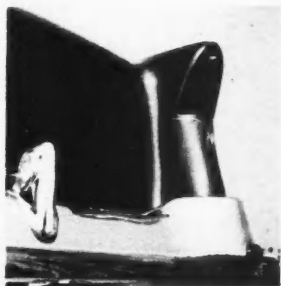


Owner Bill Shank of Duarte, Calif. examines fine custom work on Chev's front end. His desire to own and build a stand-out custom came thru an extensive reading of this magazine. Time spent restyling Bill's Chevy was one month. Bill is a member of the Sirchers.



Rear view of Shank's Chev is simple and well proportioned. Virgil's Body Shop of Monrovia is credited with all body work on Titian Red beauty. Car is lowered 5 inches both fore and aft. Pin-striping is by Tom Kelly.

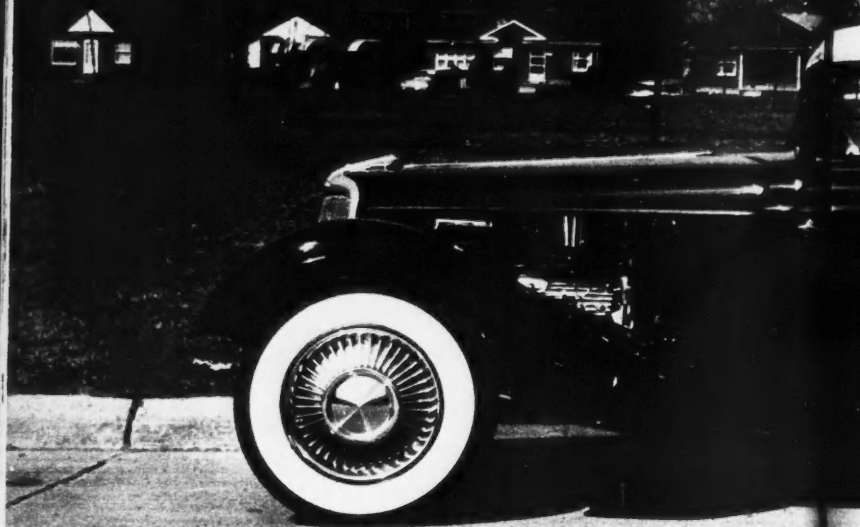
Popular '56 Buick lenses were installed in frenched opening. Smooth metal work can be easily seen, as is neat pin-striping which accentuates custom work. Notice exhaust tip thru bumper, a "must" on today's customs.





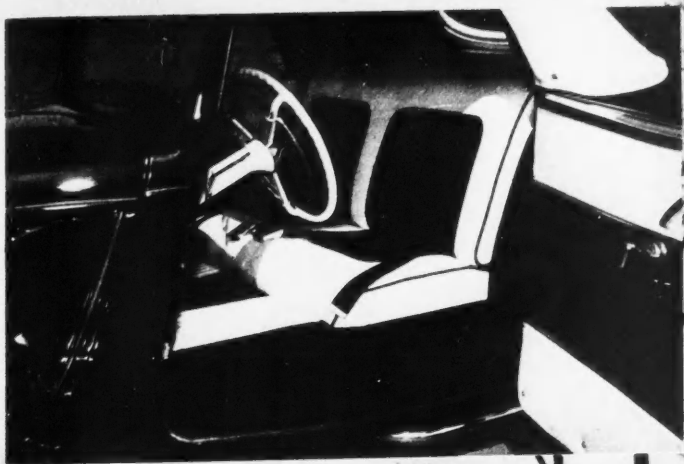
*When you spend 12 years building  
your dreamboat, it's a case of*

## **PERSEVERANCE PLUS**

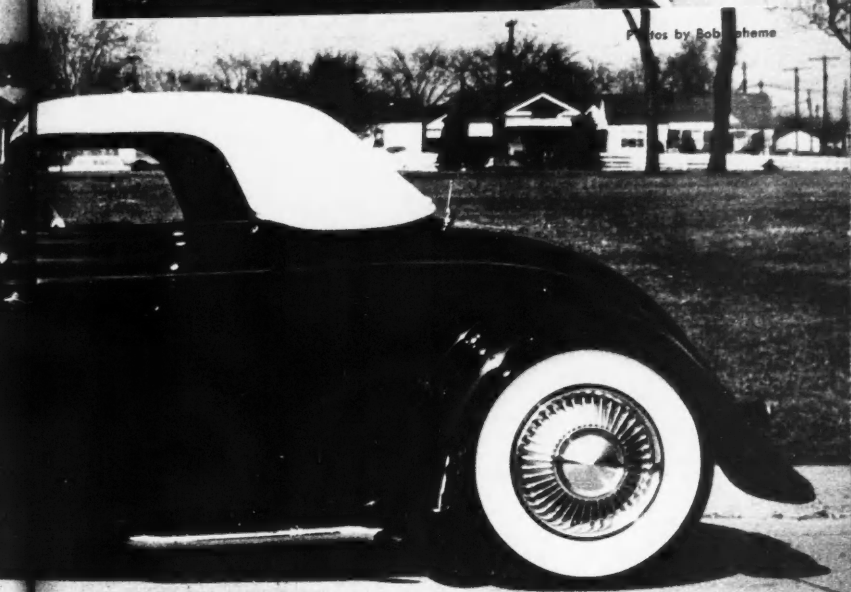


Ernest Szelesi of Lincoln Park, Michigan is a determined young man. He has spent 12 years and \$6,000 modifying his '33 Ford roadster to achieve its present immaculate condition.

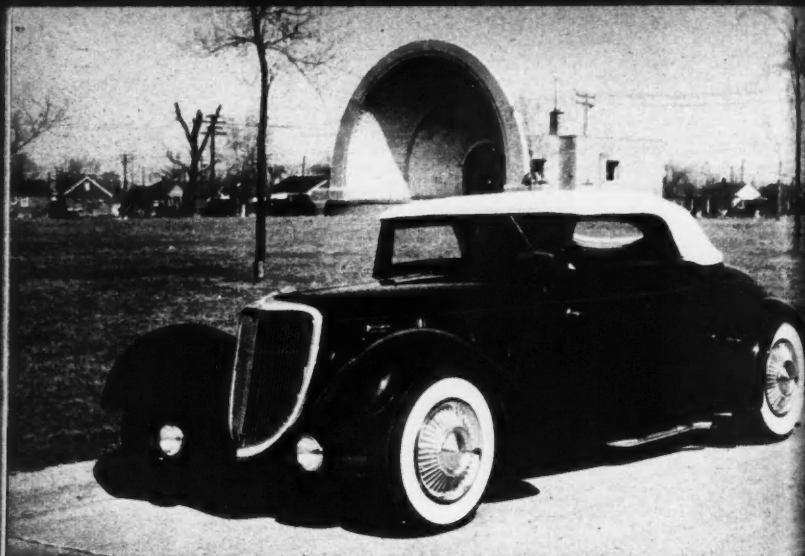




Photos by Bob Schenke



Door panels, floor rugs and cut-down seats are done in tuck and roll motif, using black and white Naugahyde done by Andy's Auto Trim. 7" channel job shows with door open.



4" chopped top adds to car's low silhouette. Bobbed fenders fore and aft, low mounted headlights, rocker panel exhaust pipes and Continental hubcaps are all part of make-up.

## PERSEVERANCE PLUS



Healthy powerplant is 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ " by 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ " '33 Ford. Extra zip is attained by Edelbrock 3-pot manifold and heads, and Isky cam.



Deck lid is shaved and all seams in tail-panel are frenched. Taillights are '46 Ford with chrome removed. There's no bumpers.

over 100 entries stormed around San Fernando's  
P.M. track—inaugurating the first annual

# WESTERN CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP MEET



Buster Vernard, 15 year old leadfoot from North Hollywood, Calif., expertly tooled his DMC to an impressive victory in the 35 lap Class AA Open Fuel Main. Buster also had fastest lap time of the meet with a rapid 7:06 and received trophy for being voted Most Popular Driver of the meet by the other drivers.



Photos by Medley, D'Olive

OCTOBER, 1958

CONTINUED



## Q. M. CHAMPIONSHIP MEET

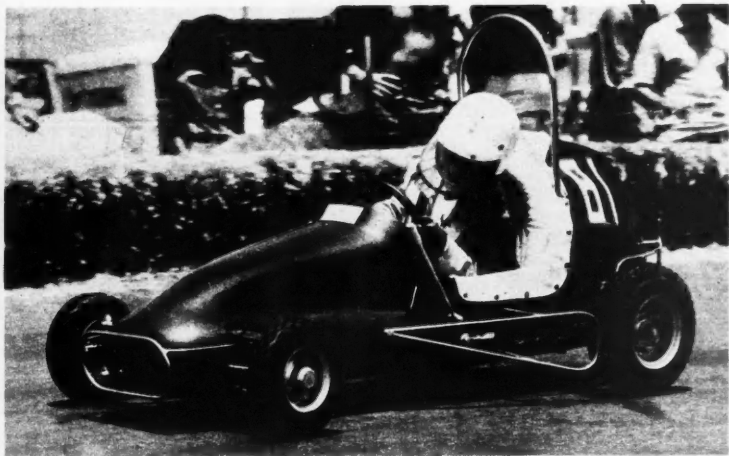


Ronnie Waid, car #22, and Steve Hilton, inside, shown in tight quarters during hectic battle for first place in Senior Stock Main. Ronnie, 9, went on to win in Race Craft.

LOWER LEFT CORNER • Ten year old Chris Shelly beams proudly after taking honors in 35 lap 8 cu. in. Main. Starting on pole, Chris, in Kurtis, was never passed.

BELOW LEFT • One of Southern California's top Q.M. drivers, Mike Olivero, shows slight disappointment after spinning out in tangled turn of Fuel event. Mike was running well up in pack with new bodied Viking-Craft.

Driving like an old pro at the tender age of 7, Dusty Blauvelt is shown wheeling and dealing during 25 lap Junior Stock Main. Starting in the next to last position, Dusty maneuvered his Pacemaker through tight traffic to emerge the victor of the event.



## Q. M. CHAMPIONSHIP MEET



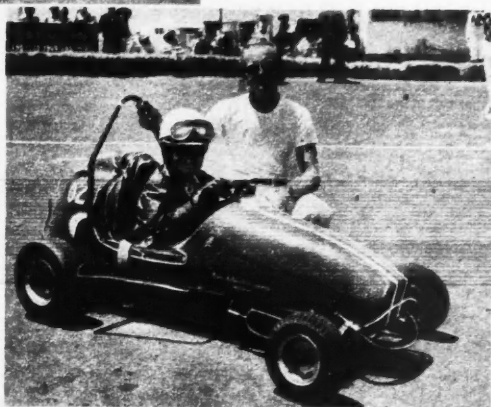
Much time, work and preparation must be given to cars before they ever set a wheel on the track. Adjustments, tuning and repair work keep Dads hopping in the pits between races. **BELOW** • The seven main event winners proudly display their beautiful, man-sized trophies.





Rooters from Glendale, Calif. cheered home-town favorite, pretty, little Donna Pemberton, 8, to an exciting wire-to-wire, victory in Class B Junior Main. Donna drove a H.P. Safe QM.

9 year old Billy Phillips cuts loose with a tight-lipped smile after being announced the winner of the Class B Senior Main. Bill steered his Speedway into first place on last lap of race. The meet was sponsored by TV Quarter Midget Assoc., under guidance of John DuPree, Pres.

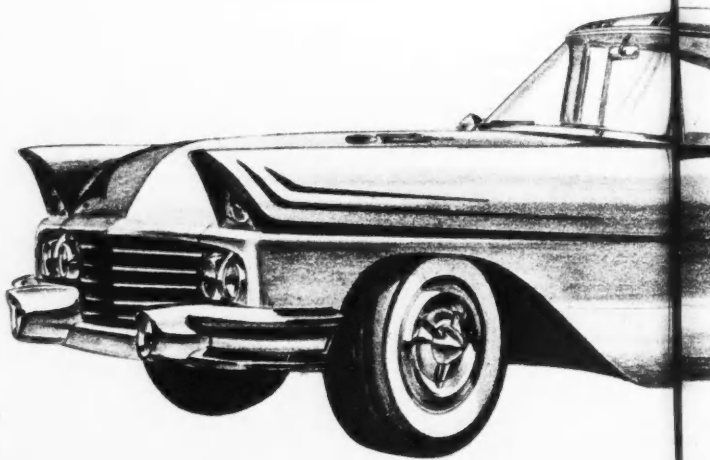


Even though his Kurtis wasn't running well, Randy Wagner entered Class A Main. Although he was being lapped left and right he continued to run. In the closing laps, spin-outs and mechanical trouble took their toll on the leaders. As they dropped by the wayside one by one, Randy determinedly chugged on to win by being only remaining driver.



MANY OF OUR readers have requested that we devote one of our Restyle Features to the '55 Mercury. We took these requests to Robert Martinez, owner of the House of Custom in San Diego, California. He could readily see why there was such great interest in these particular cars. He said that their design was such that even when given a moderate touch of customizing they could turn into a thing of real beauty. We told Robbie to use his imagination and on \$1,000, mythical of course, to show us a proof of his statement. See if you don't agree that the end results, illustrated on these pages, are indeed proof of what can be accomplished on these models for a nominal amount of money.

## HOUSE OF CUSTOM RESTYLES THE '55 MERCURY



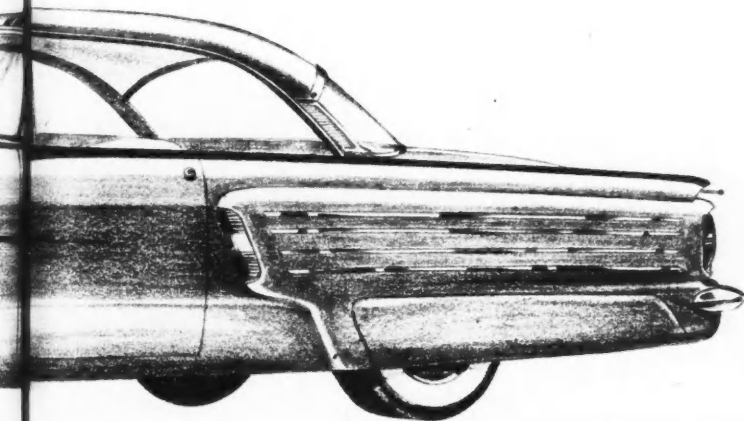
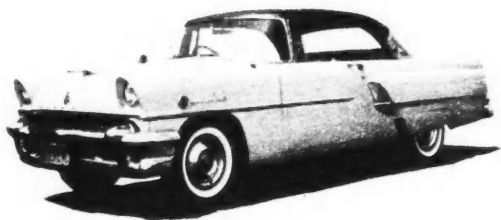




*Robert Martinez*

#### BODY MODIFICATIONS

As usual, the first step was to lower it. Coils were cut up front, springs de-arched at rear and the frame C'd. To provide adequate driveshaft clearance, the driveshaft tunnel was cut and raised. Next, all side trim was removed and holes filled in. Door handles were replaced by '58 Lincoln door buttons. Robbie then introduced a novel switch. In the leading edge of the raised portion of the rear fenders, he cut a scoop-like opening. Into the center of this he installed a parking light, then filled it out with chrome trim. The front wheel wells were flared back, giving a more streamlined appearance. He then added one of the latest style gimmicks — an Impala-type scoop.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY DICK COLLIER

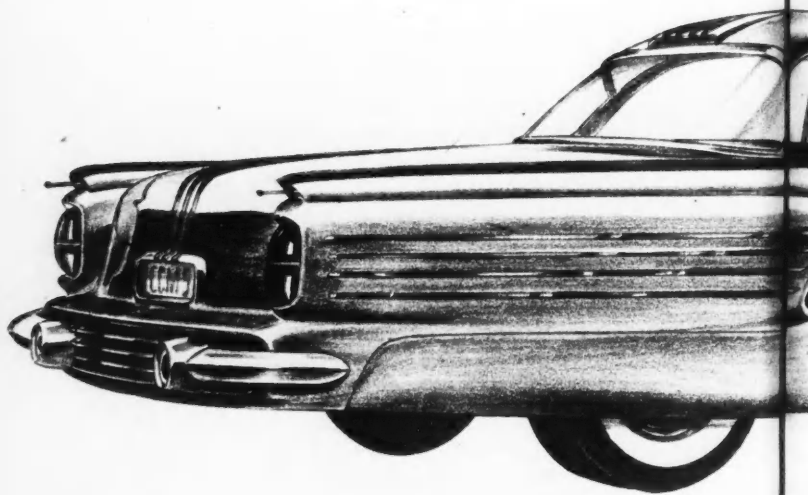
## HOUSE OF CUSTOM RESTYLES THE '55 MERCURY

### FRONTAL CHANGES

The stock Merc headlight rims were built up slightly and frenched to lend them a more pronounced "shade." After filling the seams of the stock grille shell, Robbie constructed a grille out of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " chrome tubing. On each side of the grille cavity, incorporated into the grille's design, he mounted '58 Chevrolet parking lights. For front end protection he modified a '56 Buick front bumper to follow the Merc's fender line. Ornamentation was removed from the hood and a Buick porthole sunk into each side for airscoops.

### REAR ASPECT

On the rear, Martinez started with the taillights. First he extended the openings and finished the edges with round rod. Then he inserted two sets of '57 Oldsmobile "98" lenses, vertically and back-to-back. Over the taillights he cut a pair of small scooped openings and in these, mounted radio antennas.



horizontally. Next he molded a license plate  
are built using on the panel just below the deck lid.  
a more take advantage of the latest craze of rear  
he seemed grille styling, he formed a cavity by  
constructed using two '53 Studebaker grille shells to-  
On each end, one inverted. To follow this contour  
ted into those '55 Pontiac bumper bars with Buick  
chevrolet shells grafted to the ends. Between the  
ction bumpers he constructed a small tubular grille,  
to follow similar to the one used up front.

**TAIL**  
To add a little sparkle, Robbie installed  
al spotlights and ran four strips of chrome  
down the rear fenders. He then modi-  
the tail a set of '57 Mercury skirts to blend with  
ings and fender lines. To finish off the car, Robbie  
Then had he would paint it in a solid metallic  
le '98 for and use a moderate amount of contrast-  
over the scallops to highlight the top scoop, port-  
and openings and a few of the more prominent  
antennas.

#### PARTS AND PRICE LIST

|                               | Labor           | Parts  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------|
| Lowering                      | 100.00          |        |
| Build grille and front bumper | 125.00          | 95.00  |
| Build rear pan and bumper     | 125.00          | 88.00  |
| Mount dual spotlights         | 5.00            | 30.00  |
| Modify taillights and         |                 |        |
| install antenna               | 95.00           | 12.00  |
| French headlights             | 40.00           |        |
| Modify '57 Merc skirts        | 15.00           | 30.00  |
| Build perfoholes for hood     |                 | 5.00   |
| Cut scoops in fenders and     |                 |        |
| mount parking lights          | 30.00           |        |
| Install Lincoln door buttons  | 8.00            |        |
| Cut away front wheel wells    | 20.00           |        |
| Make license plate housing    | 40.00           |        |
| Install top scoop             | 50.00           |        |
| Paint (material included)     | 65.00           |        |
|                               | 738.00          | 260.00 |
|                               | 260.00          |        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                  | <b>\$998.00</b> |        |

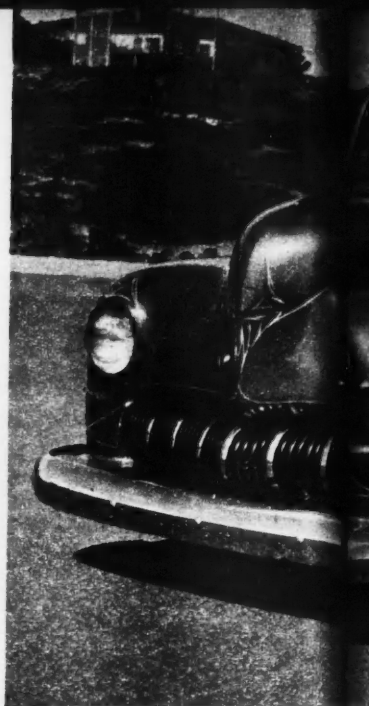


# OFF-BEAT BEAUTY

*Jack Monroe chose a path seldom followed—the '48 Plymouth route*



Frenched-in '47 Chevrolet taillights replace the original equipment. Highlight striping shown is repeated throughout car's design.



Rear view reveals filled deck, guard rails, bumper, radical rake acquired through chopped front coils, moderate-sized blower

Photos by Bob Harder



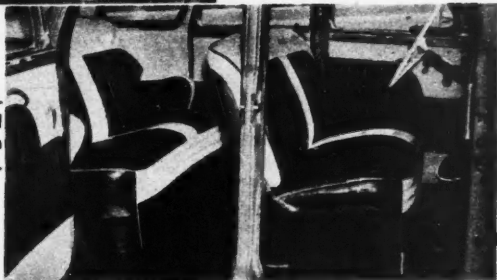


uard listening in Parakeet Green enamel, this 4-door rarity is now owned by Chuck Cleer, of  
 through Diego, Calif. Last we heard, the new owner was readying a Dodge V8 for the jewel.  
 d bla



Vee'd '50 Mercury grille and  
 shell are flanked by frenched  
 headlights. Chrome bullnose  
 strip, louvers are used to break  
 up uninteresting expanse of  
 the otherwise featureless hood.

arger of San Diego did-up in-  
 rior in padded and pleated  
 black/white Naugahyde with  
 cent of red piping for contrast.

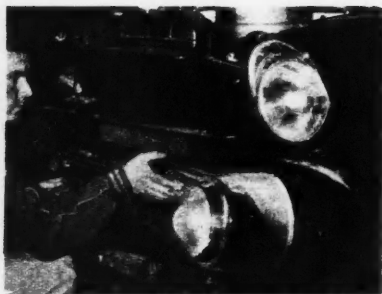


# Build Your Own Straight

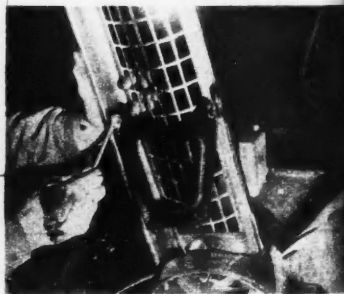
**A simple, inexpensive  
custom touch  
for many cars**



Photos by George



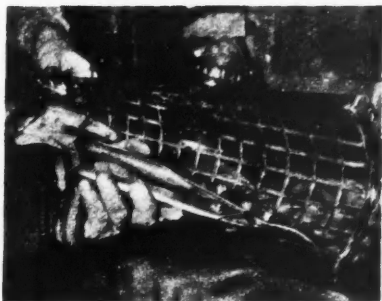
**1. First step consists of removing grille assembly from cavity. Bumper also removed.**



**2. Stock grille attachment brackets are removed from checkered grille assembly.**

# ghBar Grille for — \$5<sup>00</sup>

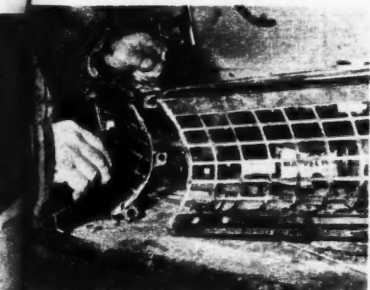
FIVE BUCKS FOR a custom straight-bar grille? Sounds cheap? And it is cheap — you're a '55 Ford owner. And even if you're not and you still want a grille assembly like the one pictured at our right, all you have to do is purchase the basic parts from your local auto wrecking yard for a few additional dollars and you're in business. The '55 Ford grille assembly is a natural for transposing it to the grille you see on the opposite page. Using only the outer frame and park light end sections, all that's needed to complete its appearance is three straps of one-half inch "U" channel placed across the frame's opening. Presto — a straight-bar grille. An assembly of this type also fits the '56 Ford being that the grille cavity of the '55 and '56 are identical. For other makes and models modifications would be in store, either in the grille cavity or to the grille assembly itself. For details of construction check the following pages and if you don't agree that the '55 Ford grille assembly has been a real "sleeper"



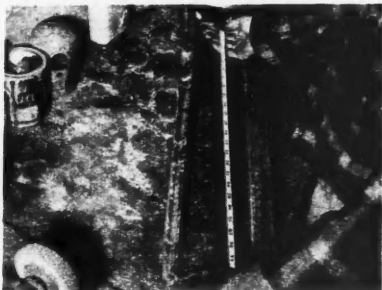
4. Checkered section of grille is now cut away from the outer frame of the assembly.



5. Edges of the outer frame where center section was cut away are ground smooth.



Center brace of grille assembly is also removed and grille broken down into halves.



6. Openings of each half section are now measured to find length of "U" channel.

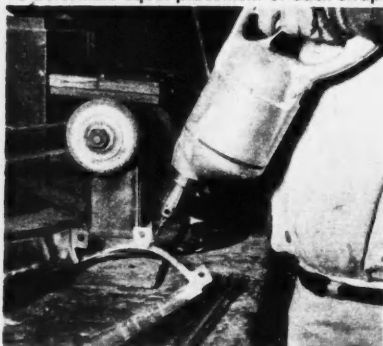
## Straight Bar Grille



7. "U" channel is marked for length and cut to size. Six pieces will be needed in all.



9. Area of frame's opening is now measured to determine equal placement of each strap.



11. After marking off positions of each "U" channel strap, attachment holes are drilled.



8. Both ends of each "U" channel strap are now drilled for purpose of attachment to metal w



10. Position of each strap is now marked off along ends of frame and thru cen



12. Horizontal straps are placed in position and tightly secured with metal screws.





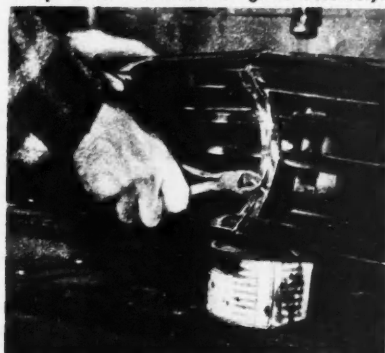
trap The arc of the stock grille attachment  
ent bracket will have to be modified as shown.



14. Hand file the bracket so the arc will  
fit up to new contours of grille assembly.



mar Once attachment brackets have been  
cent to correct grille contours, reinstall.



16. The two grille halves are now bolted  
back together at center, trim re-installed.



po last step before installing new grille  
re assembly is to re-install the center bracket.



18. Just as it came out, new straight-bar  
assembly neatly slides back into opening.



*take it off here, add it on there  
... it's all in knowing how*

## **PLAIN and FANCY**

Vancouver, B.C. is the home of owner Don Bliss who did entire upholstery job himself, and possessed all of the ideas for the custom convertible. Don is a member of the West Point Kustoms of Vancouver, Canada.



Don Bliss' radically restyled '50 Ford convert features smooth workmanship and original ideas to make it a standout custom. Car was lowered thru the use of blocks and reversed spindles in front end and blocks were used in rear suspension system.



Front end was modified using two '51 Ford grille lip bars welded together, forming a shell about floating '51 Kaiser bar. Deep '53 Merc rims were used to french lights; corners were rounded on the louvered, smoothed, peaked, and bull-nosed hood.

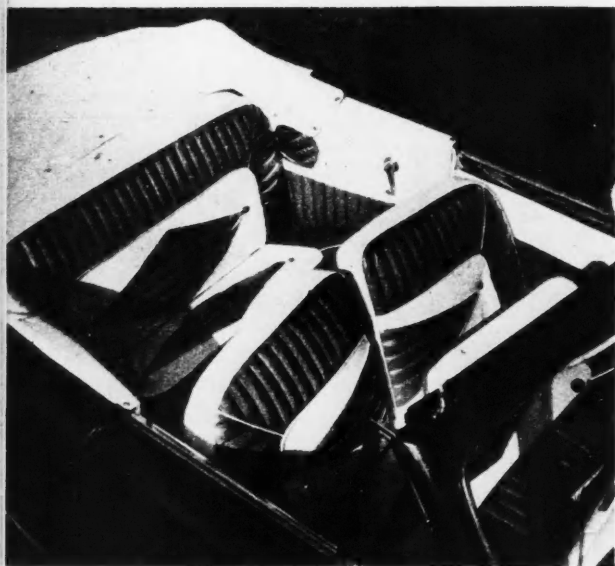
Photos by Bud Lang



# PLAIN and FANCY



Orange and white interior upholstered in diamond-shaped pattern with orange red contrasts with Titian Red lacquer finish. Notice the dual rear radio speakers located the side panels. Doug's Auto Metal of Vancouver performed all the body and paint work on the Bliss convertible. Many unsightly body seams were filled giving smoothness.



Frenched taillights feature '50  
Ford lenses hooded with sheet  
metal extensions. Take note of  
rounded corners on trunk lid.  
Dual pipes exit exhaust gases  
thru curved tips under bumper.

Skirts were reformed by hand  
and "scooped" '53 Merc grille  
teeth have been added to give  
them an extra nice appearance.  
The extreme lowness of Bliss'  
Ford convertible is very evident.



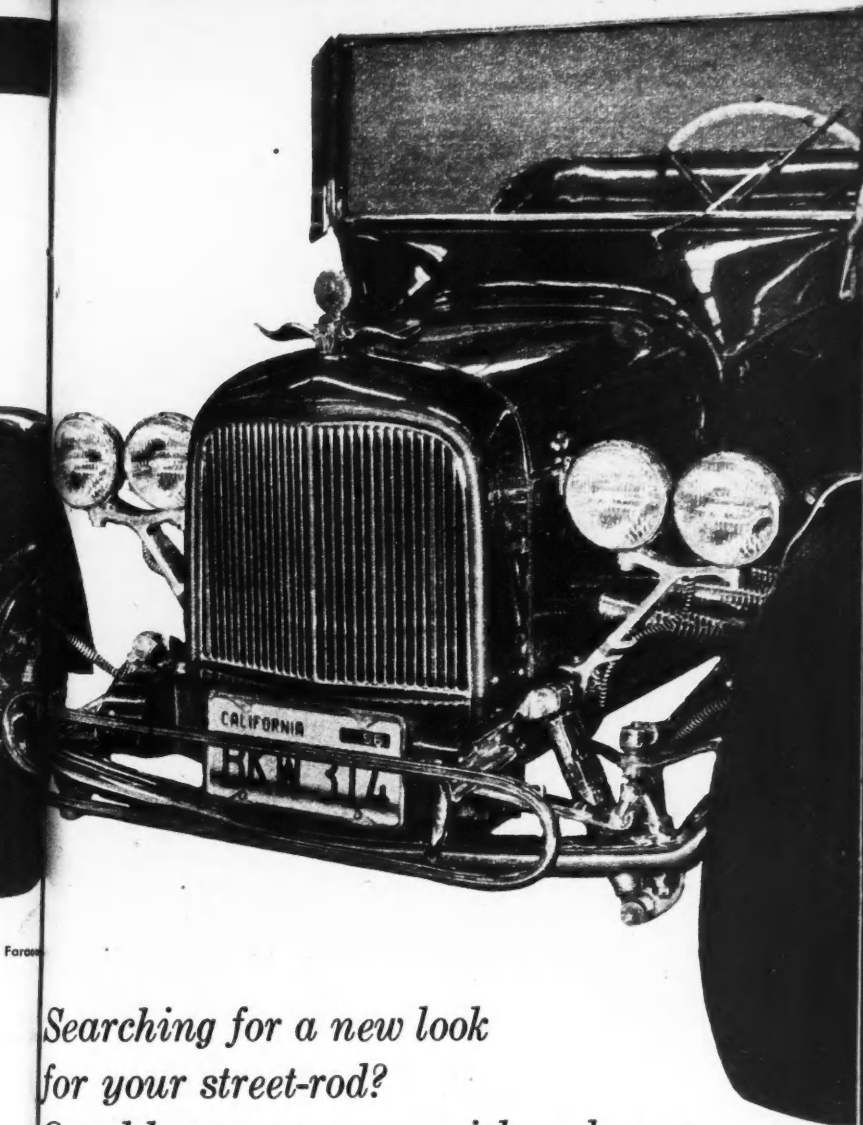
ACCESSORY OF THE MONTH

# BOLT ON QUAD LIGHTS FOR ROADSTERS

**L**ATE MODEL CUSTOM cars haven't got a thing on the classic roadsters and coupes these days. Not since Lee Chapel, proprietor of Lee's Speed Shop of Oakland, California, introduced his extremely functional bolt-on quad headlight brackets and small lamps. Made from sturdy aluminum, brackets are beautifully polished-off in chrome like finish. Kit's seal beam headlight units of six inch diameter come either prime painted ready for finish color painting, or chromed finished buckets are available for a slight increase in cost. The nice thing about Lee's new quad lamp kit is that installation is no more than a simple bolt-on chore which can be accomplished by the most inexperienced craftsman. Included in kit is a complete wiring diagram for completing the final assembly. On the following pages you will find complete instructions concerning the kit's installation and wiring. If you have been searching for a new look for your street-rod, then these quad lamps are a quick and inexpensive solution. Brackets are priced at \$16.95 with headlights selling from \$7.50 to \$9.95 apiece depending on the finish desired. For further information write: Lee's Speed Shop, 1143-cc East 14th Street, Oakland 6, California.



Photos by Frank Farano



Foram

*Searching for a new look  
for your street-rod?  
Quad lamps are now quick and easy*

## ACCESSORY OF THE MON



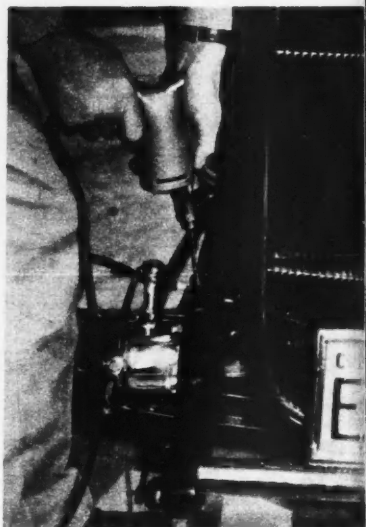
1. Complete kit includes polished aluminum brackets, four 6" diameter lamps, wiring.



2. The first step consists of positioning the brackets and marking off attachment holes.

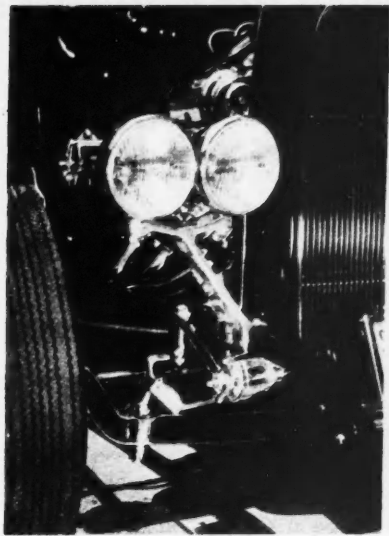


3. With bracket attachment holes marked on frame, center punch holes before drilling.



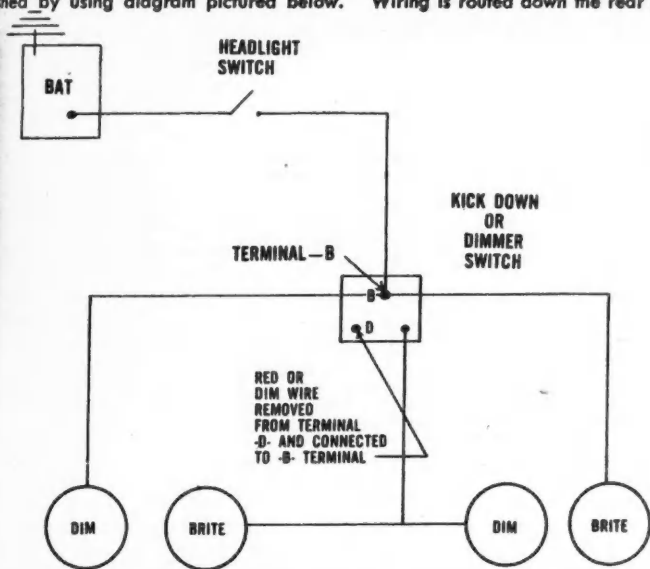
4. Attachment holes are drilled. Brackets are designed so as to fit the frame snugly.





ing that. Wiring headlights can be easily accom-  
plished by using diagram pictured below.

6. Finish appearance offers custom styling.  
Wiring is routed down the rear of bracket.



Wiring diagram above illustrates complete circuit from the battery-to-switch-to lights.

## REUPHOLSTER with a BRUSH!



(not a paint) impregnates leather or vinyl plastic upholstery. Won't chip or peel. Fadeproof, waterproof. Use on home & lawn furniture. Write for free information, color chart, and dealer location.

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## WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?



By Bob Pendergast

### MERC UPDATING

Dear Bob:

I own a '53 Merc, and am going to swap engines. I want to keep the cost as low as possible and would like to stick to a Ford product. The Merc has stick shift with overdrive, which I would like to keep. What is the latest model Ford, T-Bird, Merc or Lincoln engine that will bolt on to my transmission without an adaptor?

—Jim Curtis,  
Fort Thomas, Arizona

'54 through '57 Ford, T-Bird and Mercury engines will bolt-up to '51 through '53 Mercury transmissions without an adaptor. A T-Bird or pick-up truck oil pan will be required to clear the front cross-member, along with the oil strainer and pick-up pipe to match the pan. Front motor mounts and dropped tie rods are available from several equipment manufacturers. The voltage conversion problem may be avoided by using '55 starter and generator, if the engine of your choice is a '56 or '57. Personally, I'd avoid the '54 because of its lower displacement, poorer combustion chamber design, and notorious tendency to eat camshafts like a candy-loving juvenile.

### NO BED OF ROSES

Dear Bob:

I have a '57 283" Chev V8 I'm using for 1/3 mile oval track work. It's stock except for Duntov cam kit and dual-point centrifugal advance distributor. The carb is a '56 Corvette Rochester. In the turns the carb is either starving the left bank or flooding the right bank of cylinders. Would a wedge help this situation? I have gone .004" richer on the secondaries but it still seems a little lean at

will throttle. The valves want to float at 6,000 RPM. I have a set of .035" shims that were given to me with the camshaft — should I use them under the regular springs?

This is my first OHV and frankly, I'm rather disappointed with it because the flat-head Fords running here are quite capable of playing right with me out of the chute and down the straights. However, they are allowed any bore and stroke and any amount of carbs, while I'm limited to 292" and one carburetor.

— Harold Adcock,  
Key West, Florida

The OHV's superiority over the flathead, inch for inch, lies in their capacity for better breathing at high RPM. Restricted to one carburetor as you are, your biggest gun is spiked and you will find running against flatheads having unlimited carburetion no bed of roses. But — you may be able to save the day by replacing your present carburetor. The flooding-out you mention is a characteristic of that series Rochester — the newest Carters just don't do it, as they have two long, narrow float-bowls running the same direction as the car, thus minimizing surge. The '58 Pontiac Carter four-throat has 6.36 square inches of total venturi area compared to the miserly 3.34 of the Rochester you're now using. In the lean condition you mention is probably the result of under-carburetion being so chronic that ridiculously large jets would be required to compensate. I suggest you change carburetors instead. Regarding your valve float problem: four current springs give you 81 lbs. on the seat and 189 lbs. open. Adding the spacers you mentioned will boost these figures to 90 and 199. Two spacers per valve or one 1/16" each would give 95 and 211. The truck heavy-duty single spring gives 80 and 208 — this would be my choice. Be sure to run the inner supressors with any of these combinations, as they control spring surge which is often responsible for float. If adding spacers or changing to the truck springs doesn't get the job done, you've still the option of getting one of the many dual-spring sets made up by all the cam grinders, but cam life with really stiff springs isn't something to write home about.

Getting this engine to rev is a must to keep up with the flatheads — they have better low RPM torque, so to blow 'em off you must always be pulling a lower gear.

#### BUDGET BOMB

Dear Bob:

My brother and I own a '56 Chev with Power-Pac engine that is stock except for a mild 3/4 race cam. The car has Powerglide, which we believe a big detriment to its lagging ability. We have only been able to

**CONTINUED**

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## WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM? continued

turn 80 in the standing quarter so far, would like your suggestion for some way to get it up to 90. It's been hard for us to get any more speed equipment as we are attending college so most of our budget goes toward school expenses.

— Phillip Lasinsky,  
 Charleston, W. Va.

The most for the least in your case would be rear-end gear change. Powerglide-equipped Chevrolets like yours came factory equipped with 3.54 ring and pinion. For dragging you need at least 4.11. My suggestion is for you to obtain a 4.11 ring and pinion gear set along with another third member. This will allow you to change gears in less than an hour, making your selection optional.

## DON'T

Dear Bob:

My problem concerns steering geometry. When installing a 2½" dropped axle on a reversed main spring eyes on a '32 Ford the spindles (stock '46) be reversed (left to right, right to left) placing the tie rod in front of the axle without any ill effects on steering?

— Bob Hamilton,  
 Sacramento, California

No! You've seen belly tanks and dragsters set up this way, no doubt, and for what they

seen for a road machine. I can't think of a better way to become a member of the on-your-head club than to do this — and here's why: Look at your spindle arms — you'll notice an imaginary line extending from where the rod fastens onto the spindle arm, out to the center line of the king-pin, would be slanting out, as well as forward. This causes the wheel on the inside of a turn to turn sharper than the outside wheel, which is correct since the inside wheel is actually describing a smaller circle. If you reverse the spindles, placing the rod out in front, you have also reversed this effect. Now the outside wheel turns sharper than the inside wheel. This would be noticeable during the straight-away running at high speed, as proven by the belly tanks and dragsters so equipped. At slow speeds you wouldn't notice it either, but when you took a corner, fast enough to cause the inside wheel to get light and transfer weight to the outside wheel, you would notice it — and then some. Your turning radius would suddenly get smaller when this weight shift took place, perhaps enough to cause you to spin-out or roll. Don't mess around with steering geometry on any car to be used for the road — it's an easy way of becoming a statistic.

#### GOOFED

Dear Bob:

I am writing in regards to CAR CRAFT's recent transmission story (DRAGS: STICK SHIFT OR AUTOMATIC?), May '58. I have fifty Olds V8 with triple carburetion. This otherwise stocker was bought sans trans. For drag strip performance, was I wise to spend \$10 for a LaSalle box, flywheel, bell housing, hydraulic clutch? Considering the distance to the Coast's trans experts, should I have purchased a drag-shifting automatic? I think others may benefit from your answer.

— Denny Mills,  
Egbertsville, N.Y.

You read the story, Denny — It's awfully hard to laugh-off that authenticated improvement in the hydramatic held over the stick-shift. Look at it this way — when they removed your automatic, they took out a 4-speed box and replaced it with a 3-speed. That lowest gear in the hydramatic is what gets the big, heavy cars like yours off the line in a hurry, which is the easiest way to get a good E.T. The disadvantage of the hydramatic is its low shifting points for high-revving engines, but this can be corrected through the use of modified valve bodies now available through mail — you no longer must live in California to enjoy a "Drag-O-Matic".

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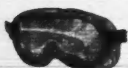
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# CUSTOM QUERIES

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## HOOD SWAP

Dear George:

I have a '52 Chev convertible which I have  
nosed. Since it is a two-piece hood, it is crack-  
ing at the seam. I have heard that a '49 or  
Olds hood will fit. If this is true, what year  
and model should I use? Thanks for your  
cooperation.

— Rolf K. Gefrom  
Elmhurst, N. Y.

The Oldsmobile hood would have to be  
worked completely to fit your Chevy. I think  
you would be better off to grind down your  
hood and fill it again. If the job is done properly  
it shouldn't crack out.

## CAD GRILLE

Dear George:

I have a late '51 Cadillac, 62 Series, convertible. The grille needs replacing and I would like to know which of the later types of Cad grilles will fit best without too much alteration? Can perforated aluminum be purchased to form such a grille? Also, I can obtain a custom grille, checker-board type, that fits a '55 Chevy but was wondering if this would be large enough to fill out the cavity without using any tubing?

I aim to get rid of that big, ornate grille and by doing so will be rid of the worst part of the excess chrome. I will appreciate any ideas you can give me.

— Jack Mosher

Holland, Michigan

Perforated aluminum can be obtained and cut to form a grille but I don't believe it will give you the results you want. The '55 Chevrolet grille isn't large enough to fill out the Cad's grille cavity. I think your best bet would be to use a '54 Cadillac grille. It will look real sharp and can be adapted without too much alteration.

## HOOD AND GRILLE BAR

Dear George:

First, I would like to know if the '51 Ford hood is interchangeable with the hood on my '50 Ford? Next, I would like to know if the '55 or '56 Plymouth grille bar can be adapted to my car without any major modifications? Keep up the fine work.

— Alvin Graham

Phoenix, Arizona

The '49, '50 and '51 Ford grilles are all interchangeable with one another. The '55 or '56 Plymouth grille bar is one of the easiest bars to use on the '50 Fords.

## DRIVESHAFT SCAPE

Dear George:

I have a '55 Oldsmobile and I am planning on lowering it front and rear. The only trouble is that right now the rear is lowered only 2" and I am having trouble with the driveshaft scraping when I start off fast. Also when I go over a steep driveway the frame hits the ground. I wonder if you could tell me what to do?

— Richard Valentine  
Cleveland, Ohio

If the frame is low enough to hit the ground on high spots there's not much you can do except be careful. As for the driveshaft scraping when you take off fast, I would suggest installing

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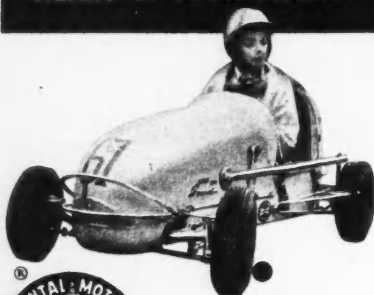
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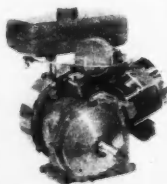
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## CUSTOM QUERIES

some light overload springs. Helwig Springs of Los Angeles makes some that should be suitable. If this doesn't work the only alternative is to cut and raise the driveshaft tube.

### OLDS RESTYLE

Dear George:

My present car is a '54 Oldsmobile hardtop. So far I have nosed and decked shaved all side trim and molded in the shell. I would like to put in a new grille front bumper without reworking the body. Do you have any suggestions on this? I plan on frenching in my stock taillight lenses, using 1/4" round rod for the edge. What kind of rod do you use for this type of work. I find your articles very helpful.

— John Abramowicz  
Mamaica Plain, Mass.

I think you would be wise to leave your present bumper on and install a solid chrome bar grille. There are accessory bar grilles available but none will fit your car, you could make your own without too much trouble. We use regular 1/4" welding rod for round rod edges.

### BLINKER AND BUMPER SWITCH

Dear George:

I have a '55 Buick Century hardtop and would like to install '56 Buick taillights and rear bumper. Is there anything in particular that I should look out for or any major problems I might encounter in this installation?

Also I would like to install dual pipes. I have heard you have to cut holes in the frame and that this weakens it considerably. Is this true and if so what is the solution?

— Michael Manos  
Astoria, New York

There shouldn't be any major problems on swap, Mike. It just requires a small amount of cutting and fitting. Just check your measurements carefully throughout the operation. Cutting holes for pipes in the frame does weaken it enough to make any difference.

### WHAT LATCH?

Dear George:

I am starting to customize my '52 mouth. I want to dechrome the deck lid. I don't know what kind of latch set-up to use. Can I use the stock latch or must I use

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## CUSTOM QUERIES

from another make? Also, could I install the '55 Ford grille center piece into the grille cavity without too much trouble? I will appreciate any help you can give me.

— Robert Michels  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

I would use the lock unit from a '49 Chev, as this is about the best I've found so far. A '55 Ford center piece will fit into the grille cavity fairly easy. New mounting brackets will have to be made.

## EARLY MERC QUERIES

Dear George:

My buddy and I have recently purchased a '46 Mercury to try our hand at customizing. Could you suggest a grille that will fit in the stock grille shell without any torch work? How about some taillight suggestions? We are thinking of using '49 Buick bumpers, front and rear. Do you think these will look alright or do you have some better ideas?

— Ronnie Rettich

I think you could mount a '55 Ford grille without any problems, Ronnie. There should be no

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torch work involved. For taillights, I would suggest using the '56-'57 Corvette lights mounted on the side of the fenders. There is a complete how-to-do-it on this installation in the May issue of Car Craft. The '49 Buick bumpers should look OK.

## SIDE TRIM

Dear George:

I would like to know what side trim can be adapted to my '49 Mercury without extensive modifying and would look real sharp. Any help will be greatly appreciated.

— Bob Deckert  
Bronx, New York

'54 Buick side trim will go real well with '49 Mercury's body lines.

## FROM CUSTOM IDEAS

Dear George:

In the December '57 issue of CARS there was a feature titled Custom Ideas for '55-'57 Chevrolets. I particularly liked a taillight idea which showed a '56 Plymouth lens mounted with the stock Chev ribbing and retaining ring. As I am in the process of customizing my '56 Chev and haven't seen an article on this installation, was hoping you could tell me how to do it. Your articles are very interesting. Keep up the good work.

— Douglas Ondick  
Minneapolis, Minn.

This is a very simple operation, Doug. All you have to do is remove your stock taillight, measure and cut a '56 Plymouth taillight lens to fit inside your retaining ring, then re-mount the entire unit.

## COMING ATTRACTION

Miss Van Nuys, lovely Cheryl McDonald, flags off a new breed of track hot rods that will be coming your way in Next month's CAR CRAFT. This new hybrid racing is already sweeping the Pacific Coast — so be on hand for a full racing report, construction details on cars and specifications.

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